

Hafa Adai!

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4-day school week by April 1

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
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REPORTER

The Public School System will implement a four-day school week starting April 1 pursuant to austerity measures approved by the Board of Education yesterday.

BOE members unanimously voted yes to cutting school weeks to four days and PSS staff hours to just 64 hours. That means there will be no PSS classes on Fridays.

BOE chair Janice Tenorio, vice chair Herman Atalig, Marylou Ada, Andrew Orsini, and Phil-

See **SCHOOL** on **Page 4**

Board of Education members and representatives of the Public School System meet for a board meeting yesterday at the Board of Education building on Capital Hill.

KIMBERLY BAUTISTA



Over a thousand to lose jobs

By **IVA MAURIN**
iva_maurin@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

"How long can a company run on a single-digit occupancy?"

That question, which Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands chair Gloria Cavanagh posed at yesterday's Saipan Chamber of Commerce meeting at the Pacific Islands Club Saipan, has become more pressing for many hotels each day, prompting many to scramble to cut costs and let go of people to ensure their continued survival.

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MHS takes home gold at TBMF

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
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REPORTER

The Marianas High School Concert Band took home gold, their second year in a row, for their performance at the annual Tumon Bay Music

Festival in Guam.

The MHS Concert Band, which only started performing at the Tumon Bay Music Festival last year, took home gold again for the Band and Orchestra category. The group

See **MHS** on **Page 4**



Atalig

It's a go for Ataligs' trial

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona ruled late yesterday afternoon that the jury trial will proceed this Tuesday in the case against Rota Mayor Efraim M. Atalig and his girlfriend, Ev-

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INSIDE



WORLD

The coronavirus epidemic shifts westward toward the Middle East, Europe and United States.

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FOCUS

Tens of thousands of courses, from grade school to university, are forced online in China.

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LIFE & STYLE

Architects Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara are awarded the 2020 Pritzker Prize.

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Local

Man gets 10 years in fatal hit-and-run case

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

A habitual offender was slapped yesterday with a 10-year imprisonment sentence for his involvement in a hit-and-run case that killed a pedestrian in As Mahetog

in 2018.

Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho ordered David Desebel Kapileo to serve the maximum 10-year prison term, with credit for 646 days of time served.

Camacho left it to the discretion of the Board of Parole

whether to grant Kapileo parole if he qualifies after serving eight years in prison.

The 52-year-old Kapileo was ordered to pay \$16,521 in restitution to the victim's wife before his sentence ends. He is also required to pay \$25 in court costs and prohibited

from drinking alcohol.

The Office of the Attorney General had charged Kapileo with homicide by vehicle, driving while under the influence of alcohol, reckless driving, speeding, failure to maintain lane, and leaving the scene of accident.

On Jan. 30, 2019, Kapileo pleaded guilty to homicide by vehicle and reckless driving. He later admitted that he was so intoxicated on the day the incident happened that he does not even remember what

exactly occurred.

Kapileo hit Shanghai Gao on April 1, 2018. Gao, a Chinese national, was hit at the intersection of Chalan Pale Arnold Road and As Mahetog near the Saipan Ice and Water Co. He died that same day.

Police said that, according to a witness, after the SUV hit the victim, the driver kept driving south, then made a left turn on Mihaville in Garapan. Police found the SUV seven hours later.

Kapileo has been in jail

since his arrest on May 28, 2018, after failing to post a \$100,000 cash bail.

Assistant public defender Jean Pierre Nogues served as counsel for Kapileo. Assistant attorney general Erin Toolan represented the government.

Kapileo had been arrested several times for various cases since being released on a murder conviction.

According to court records, Kapileo fatally shot his mother with a gun at their house in Garapan in December 1992.



A Corrections officer and CNMI Court Marshals escort David Desebel Kapileo to the courtroom of Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho at the Marianas Business Plaza Building in Susupe for sentencing hearing yesterday morning.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Bill granting temporary licenses to small businesses advances

By **IVA MAURIN**
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REPORTER

Small businesses wanting to participate in community events could get temporary business licenses in the future.

Authored by Rep. Sheila J. Babauta (Ind-Saipan), House Bill 21-87, HS1, which would allow the Department of Finance to set fees and allow for temporary business licenses, passed the House Ways and Means Committee last Tuesday.

The temporary business licenses are valid for 30 days, without the option of renewal or transfer.

"H.B. 21-87 HS1 will allow for the Department of Finance to issue temporary licenses to small businesses who want to participate in community events, such as the Flame Tree Festival and Sabalu Market," Babauta said. "I support businesses in our CNMI and

believe this will encourage those with an entrepreneurial spirit to take a chance and participate in our local events to share their products and/or service."

The bill comes following the Legislature's finding that business license fees are outdated, which negatively affects the Department of Finance's ability to administer licensing laws.

Further, the current fees should be based on the North American Industry Classification System, which would identify business activity more precisely, and which will strengthen licensing requirements and tax compliance enforcement.

Aside from the temporary licenses, the bill also allows the Department of Finance to establish annual, temporary, and late fees.

"Empowering the department to make these changes

will allow for better response during good or bad economic times. The department should have the ability to increase or decrease fees as a response to our Commonwealth's economic situation," the legislator added.

Babauta expressed appreciation to Ways and Means Committee chair Rep. Ivan Blanco (R-Saipan) and the members, for their support, as well as Tax & Revenue director Tracy Norita, who reassured the committee that procedures are in place to ensure the public is involved and notified of any changes.

"I'm grateful she made time to answer questions from the members and reiterated her support, and [Finance] Secretary [David] Atalig's support, for the bill," said Babauta.

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce also submitted a letter of support.

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LOWER PRICE

Gas prices continue to go down, with Mobil Oil Marianas lowering its prices by 10 cents Tuesday morning. Photo shows the Mobil gas station on Beach Road in Garapan.

KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA

Three juveniles arrested in four separate car thefts

The Department of Public Safety executed last Sunday, March 1, 2020, arrest warrants on three suspects connected to four separate auto-theft cases on Saipan.

The first case involves a theft of vehicle that occurred on Saturday, Feb. 29, 2020, at about 12:03am, when DPS received a call reporting a theft of vehicle at a residence located in Garapan. The victim told police that an unknown individual had drove off with their 2016 Toyota Tacoma. The victim stated that the gate had been left open and the vehicle was left unlocked with its keys still in the vehicle. While interviewing the victim, police received a report of a similar vehicle hitting a parked car before speeding off and running into a house in Upper Miha in China Town. When police arrived at the scene, they noticed that a 2016 Toyota Tacoma had run into a house and did not have the keys inside the vehicle. No persons were found inside the vehicle at the time. Preliminary investigation revealed a certain item left inside the vehicle that belonged to the suspect. Witnesses in the area also helped police identify the suspect, who was later found to be a juvenile. The juvenile was found and the key for the vehicle was found on the juvenile, who was then arrested. The juvenile was found to be under the influence of alcohol, and was brought to the Commonwealth Health Center for clearance before being transported to the Department of Corrections for booking. The

FSU to continue master's program

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

The Northern Marianas College dispelled speculations of students yesterday about the Master of Education-Concentration in International Teaching program and rumors about the program's possible discontinuation.

Les Ogumoro-Uludong, Framingham State University site coordinator, stated that the program will only be discontinued if the minimum number of required students is not met.

The minimum number of students that are required in order to form a cohort—which is a graduating class—is 23 and, according to Ogumoro-Uludong there were less than 10 students who had signed up for the spring program, which resulted in the program being postponed until fall.

FSU still has spots for the fall program.

The program is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. NMC had been hosting the

juvenile was later released by the court.

The second case occurred on Dec. 11, 2019, at about 6:28pm, when the victim called to report a theft of their red 2017 Mazda 3 sedan from their apartment in San Jose, Saipan.

The victim in this case stated that they left the vehicle's key in the ignition and did not secure the vehicle. The next morning, they discovered that the vehicle was missing and called for police assistance. On the same day, police found the vehicle parked at an apartment complex in Garapan. The victim noticed that the vehicle's front bumper had been damaged and the key was missing from the vehicle.

On Dec. 13, 2019, at about 8:02am, the red 2017 Mazda 3 was reported stolen again, as the key for the vehicle had not been recovered yet. On the same date at about 10:23am, the vehicle was located inside a ditch just off the road in the village of Gualo Rai, with damage to the vehicle's passenger side window and body damage to the vehicle's right side.

The third case was reported on Dec. 13, 2019. At approximately 12:24pm, the victim called 911 to report a theft of their vehicle at their residence on Navy Hill. The victim stated that their white 2012 Ford Econoline van had been missing since Dec. 10, 2019. The victim stated that they thought an employee had taken the van but it was later discovered that the employee had not seen it since Dec. 10, 2019. The keys had been left inside the van for

program since 2001, with over 300 CNMI graduates so far.

Last December 2019, there were 24 graduates from Cohort 12; this April, there will be 25 graduates from Cohort 13.

In order to enter the program, you must have a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university. An applicant with a foreign degree must submit an official transcript(s) that will be viewed for general evaluation, and have a preferred quality point average of 2.7 on a 4.0 scale.

For eligible applicants, you must submit a signed application, pay a \$100 application fee, have official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended (if a transcript is in a foreign language, you must provide a certified English translation), two letters of recommendation that includes a cover form and letter, an essay on one's Philosophy of Education with a minimum of 500 words, and an updated professional résumé.

the employee, but the van was taken before the employee was able to pick up the vehicle.

On the same date reported at about 1:32pm, an officer making a routine patrol through Navy Hill spotted the van perform a U-turn and drive at an excessive speed toward Grace Christian Academy. Police also performed a U-turn and drove toward GCA. The officer then came upon the van, which had been left unattended and there were no occupants in the vehicle.

The victim later positively identified the vehicle and

stated that the van now has a big dent on the vehicle's right passenger side, with writings on the hood and side of the vehicle. No suspects were apprehended at the time and an investigation followed.

The fourth case was reported on Dec. 14, 2019. At 7:43am, the security of a hotel in Garapan called to report a theft of a company golf cart. Shortly after all units were notified to be on the look-out for a white golf cart, an officer conducting routine patrol though Garapan spotted the golf cart and immediately no-

ticed two individuals flee and run toward a wooded area. The officer notified all units and a K-9 was dispatched to the scene. Shortly after 8:17pm, officers radioed in that they had located the two suspects with the help of the police K-9. The suspects were brought to CHC for clearance of injuries sustained from running through the jungle, before being transported to DOC where they were booked and detained. They were later released as police conducted further investigation.

After interviews with wit-

nesses who were at the scene, combing through hours of video surveillance, and other case related evidence, DPS forwarded a request for arrest warrants on three juveniles involved in the four separate vehicle theft cases. On Saturday, Feb. 29, 2020, an arrest warrant for the three juvenile suspects for charges including theft of vehicle, conspiracy, accessory after the fact, theft, burglary, and criminal mischief was signed by the Superior Court Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio, with bail set at \$10,000 on each individual. (PR)

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IT&E

COE refuses to sign off on injunction; BOE chair requests re-vote

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
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REPORTER

Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred Ada disagrees with the Board of Education's decision to file an injunction against the CNMI government and reportedly refuses to sign off on the lawsuit.

Board chair Janice Tenorio also asked the board to revisit the idea

of filing the injunction.

According to Tenorio, Ada, who was absent from the board meeting yesterday because he is still recovering from a recent heart attack, disagrees with the idea of filing an injunction against the government.

"We can't file the injunction because the injunction has to be filed by the head of the Public School System, which is the commission-

er, who has the expenditure authority. If he signs it and he is forced to sign, it doesn't make any sense because if he goes on the stand, he's going to say, 'I'm being forced to sign it' then it'll just be null and void," she said.

During the board meeting, Tenorio also asked her colleagues to reconsider the injunction.

"If I may, colleagues, let's just

revisit this injunction, go back to the table with the governor and the Executive Branch, and talk to them and let them further explain," she said.

The BOE will hold another meeting next Wednesday at the Marianas High School campus to discuss and reaffirm the injunction as well as discuss the consequences Ada faces if he continues to refuse to sign off on the injunction.

BOE member Marylou Ada said that a decision has already been made and the board rightfully voted to file the injunction.

Phillip Mendiola-Long and Andrew Orsini also stated during the meeting that Ada answers to the

board and must comply with the board's decision. Both stated that it is "offensive" to the board that Ada does not want to comply with the decision.

Tenorio said she stands firm on her stance on the injunction and still disagrees with her colleagues.

"From the beginning, I didn't agree with the injunction, I feel there are other alternatives, other

avenues we can go by. We've been working closely with the government, the Executive Branch, and the secretary of Finance regarding the transfer of funds. I want to go back and work with our government. It's a war we're getting into when we should all be one," she said.



Ada

PH consulate holds outreach on Saipan

The Philippine Consulate General in Guam held its first mobile consular services for the year on Saipan starting last Friday at the Sun Palace Hotel in Susupe.

In all, the consulate general will be having five to six mobile consular services in the CNMI that would also include Tinian and Rota, according to consul Mark Francis Hamoy.

The four-day mobile consular services ended last Tuesday and Hamoy said they were expecting

560 passport renewals, based on pre-registration.

Aside from passport renewals, the Philippine Consulate General in Guam also conducted voter registration and applications for passport extensions, visa requests, dual citizenship, and jurat (affidavit). It also accepted reports of lost ePassports as well as births and marriages.

Hamoy said the voter registration would enable Filipino citizens in the CNMI to cast their votes in the 2020

Philippine Presidential Election.

The next consular outreach will be held in April.

"We are hoping that many Filipinos will actively register, and overseas voters are encouraged to make sure that they are obtaining their information from reliable sources," he said.

For more information on the mobile consular services of the Philippine Consulate General in Guam, you can follow their Facebook page. *(Chevy Alipio)*

MHS

From Page 1

was also awarded the Command Performance award for Bands and Orchestra.

The MHS Concert Band will return to the festival this Saturday to perform for the final night.

According to Joyce Espinosa, a saxophone player for the MHS Concert Band, winning gold means achieving the highest level of performance at the festival.

"It doesn't necessarily mean we were first place because others can receive gold. It is like the level of the performance. There's bronze, silver, and gold, depending on the

rubric," she said.

Espinosa said the group takes pride in the fact that they're new to the festival, with just two years' experience, and have received the honor in both years.

"So in the two years that we've been participating, we got the gold twice now. We feel so happy and proud because our band has been through a lot. We lost our conductor this year and so we had to ask Mrs. Atsuko Eck to help us, even though she wasn't a teacher at MHS. Just the fact that we were able to go and represent the CNMI already made us feel so proud, but getting the gold made us feel ecstatic. It's been a long journey for us," she said.

Espinosa added that the fact that

they were also awarded their first Command Performance award made this year's experience extra special.

"We just want to recognize our previous band conductor, Ms. Tamiko Winkfield, our new conductor, Mrs. Atsuko Eck, for really helping us to succeed, and our chaperones, Ms. Christine Tudela, Mrs. Emilisa Norita, and Mr. Jericho Tobias, for making the trip possible in the first place," she said.

Also receiving recognition at the festival was Hopwood Middle School's HDMP T-Woah, which received gold in their group performance and Saipan Community School's Ukulele Band for taking home silver.

OVER

From Page 1

At the same meeting, Labor Secretary Vicky Benavente disclosed that the department has been notified that over a thousand employees from different companies will lose their jobs, that over a dozen companies have asked them about reduction in workforce and hours.

Based on the March records of seats on flights still coming to the CNMI, HANMI hotels are looking at less than 30% occupancy, should the load factor be at 60%.

"The actual total amount of seats is 12,555. If we had those 12,555 seats filled 100%, our occupancy for HANMI hotels would still only be 49.7%," said Cavanagh, "but it is actually unreasonable to think that we're going to have 100% load factor."

Cavanagh added that it is not even a matter of incentivizing the tour agents nor the airlines, but the reality that nobody wants to fly.

Measures taken

To provide the CNMI Department of Labor with a complete picture as to how the hotels are doing, HANMI has prepared a survey that asks the

hotels about its current services, if the services and hours are being cut, if people are being laid off, or if the hotel is closing.

As general manager, Cavanagh said that PIC alone has minimized its services and has implemented time reductions as a cost-saving measure.

She added that her employees would love to get 32 hours a week, in relation to the government implementing a 64-hour per pay period, 32-hour per week austerity.

Revealing that PIC only had an 8% occupancy yesterday, Cavanagh asked, "In reality, how long can a company run on a single-digit occupancy?"

While acknowledging that layoffs are a possibility, Cavanagh said that that is not in the plan at the moment.

"If we send everyone away, and we lay off people, then that's going to be an issue," she said. This is because, once the virus outbreak is resolved and the tourists are ready to go back, the CNMI tourism industry may not have enough manpower then.

Laid off

Benavente said that they have put emergency regulations in place, valid for 120 days, and that they have also already asked the U.S. Department of

Labor for unemployment assistance.

"The U.S. Department of Labor has been communicating with us. We have asked 'the big ask,' can we get some help for disaster, unemployment assistance for more than 1,000 employees that we've been notified will be laid-off, a thousand people without jobs," she said.

Benavente revealed that since December, the Department of Labor has received over a dozen letters from companies who are asking about reduction in force as well as reduction in hours.

Aside from asking U.S. Labor for assistance, the CNMI Department of Labor has also organized a Workforce Resource Fair on March 11, from 4pm to 6pm, targeted to employees.

The Northern Marianas Housing Corp., Commonwealth Development Authority, and some other organizations will be present to help people who are going to be losing their jobs, as well as whose hours would be reduced.

As the number of tourists drop to its lowest due to the COVID-19 outbreak, hotels have been tightening their belts and have been implementing measures to keep its operations running.

ATALIG

From Page 1

elyn Atalig.

This comes soon after Manglona denied Efraim Atalig's renewed request to move the trial to a later date.

At the hearing, assistant U.S. attorney Eric O'Malley, counsel for the U.S. government, confirmed that he sent a letter of immunity to all of Efraim Atalig's co-defendants in the Superior Court case.

David G. Banes, counsel for Efraim Atalig, argued for the continuance of the trial. Steven Pixley, counsel for Evelyn Atalig, joined in Efraim Atalig's motion.

Banes renewed his motion for continuance of the trial in the federal case after learning that the U.S. Attorney's Office offered the unindicted

witnesses an "informal immunity" and not "statutory immunity."

Banes said statutory immunity enables a court to compel the testimony of a non-cooperating witness.

O'Malley informed the court that it will take an estimated five days to present their case.

Manglona informed the parties that there will be 12 jurors and two alternates, for a total of 14 jurors.

In the federal court case, Efraim and Evelyn Atalig are charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud and theft, wire fraud, theft from program receiving federal funds, and false statement.

In the Superior Court case, the Office of the Attorney General charged Efraim Atalig and seven co-defendants with misconduct in public office, which is misdemeanor or offense. The bench trial is currently set for March 20.

SCHOOL

From Page 1

lip Mendiola-Long all voted yes to the proposed 16-hour across-the-board cut.

With the approved cuts, PSS staff will have every Friday off without any changes in instructional hours, according to Mendiola-Long.

"[We approved] a 64-hour pay cut, every Friday off, and then no additional hours or minutes added to the school day so elementary schools will still be 7:30am to 2:30pm and middle school and high school will still be 8:30am to 3:30pm," he said.

Even with that, PSS still expects to incur a \$2-million deficit, Mendiola-Long said.

"We're going to be back here. The administration proposed a budget that only cuts a little amount and we'll still be ending the school year with a \$2-million deficit and zero for operations. There's no way to sustain it. You can't end the year with a \$3-million deficit, so that would mean that you're going to have to come back and do further cuts," he said.

Mendiola-Long added that the concern is whether the PSS administration is doing enough to cut and prepare its teachers and staff so that they understand that the cuts are tem-

porary and further cuts are underway unless the injunction enforcing the Supreme Court's opinion on the certified question is carried out.

"We'll be back here come April unless we win the injunction. If we win the injunction, the government is forced to appropriate the money in accordance to the slip opinion, then this may be the last cut because we're looking at a whole different set of math," he said.

Mendiola-Long also mentioned that teachers whose salaries were frozen last year as part of PSS' previous austerity measures will be adjusted and then cut.

"In order to be fair across the board, if you've earned your certification and you've been approved, we'll adjust you to where you're supposed to be and then we'll implement the 64-hour cut," he said.

According to Marianas High School teacher Jeremiah Rother, it's disappointing that he, and his colleagues, will experience another cut, especially since their salaries have yet to be restored since the last cut in 2019.

"I hope the injunction is filed post-haste. I hope the courts rule in favor of PSS, and I hope that the constitution is upheld as soon as possible and hopefully this is our last cut and as short-lived as possible," he said.

Kilili calls for improved veterans services in the CNMI

By IVA MAURIN
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REPORTER

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) has appealed directly to Veterans Affairs Secretary Robert Wilkie for the department to improve its services in the CNMI.

At a U.S. House Veterans Affairs Committee hearing last Feb. 28, Sablan told to Wilkie about the “utter frustration” Marianas veterans have had with the lack of access to their healthcare benefits. There are no Community-Based Outpatient Clinics in the CNMI, nor a Veterans Center, and the del-

egate expressed concern over the VA’s decision to just run a community provider program for the Pacific territories.

Wilkie assured Sablan of the department’s commitment to veterans in the CNMI. “I have to be more creative in getting our partners in the Department of Defense out to the Marianas and expand also, and I spoke to the governor of Guam about this a week and a half ago. Expand our VA presence in Guam as the Naval Hospital expands. We’re trying to be very creative,” Wilkie said.

Sablan lamented that in the CNMI, it took the VA longer to

get the social worker they hired to report to work on its first day than it took for the social worker to retire from his position, and highlighted that there are no caregivers nor veteran affairs supportive housing in the CNMI.

“You guys were talking about programs, caregivers, and HUD VASH. Those are not available in my district because VA will not put staff in my district! I’ve got nothing except for a fee-based doctor who’s available twice a week to see 400 veterans—almost 500,” Sablan told Wilkie. “Sir, when they put on a uniform, they are as much American as you are. And yet,

when they get wounded and they go to the islands, they’re only half an American. It’s enough that they don’t vote for their commander-in-chief, sir. Give them some decency!”

Wilkie said that he had discussions with the United States Indo-Pacific Command to bring in people and their ships to help care for CNMI veterans, and also to expand the veterans facility in Guam, the closest that would serve veterans on the islands.

Dr. Richard Stone, the Veteran Health Administration executive in charge, said at the hearing that VA feels that it could better serve the veteran population by directly contracting with the providers in the area.

Stone also added that the “size of this market is so small

as far as the number of veterans that are in it, that the third party administrators, we felt, we could administer better directly.”

Sablan has been urging veterans to sign up and register with the VVHA, in an effort to

push for the establishment of a CBOC in the Marianas, to make health care access easier for veterans on the islands, where they could be provided with outpatient services, as well as health and wellness visits.

WAO, CWA to host first International Women’s Day

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

The Women’s Affairs Office, in collaboration with the CNMI Women’s Association, will be having its first International Women’s Day this Saturday, March 7, 2pm at the Pedro T. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe.

The International Women’s Day will have the theme of “Continuing to Rise: Women Leading Sustainable Development” and is open to the public.

At the mini-women exposition, first lady Diann Torres and Wella Palacios, wife of

Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, will recognize “Woman of Action.” To be recognized as a “woman of action,” the nominee has become the woman she is today and in the position she is in despite going through hardships. The awardee will be nominated by a person who thinks you will be a great candidate, submits your success story, along with your photo. Torres and Palacios will present the award to the chosen recipient.

According to Annamae Adaza, community relations coordinator of the WAO, since the women in the CNMI are diverse, the WAO and CWA

invited women from the Filipino community, Chinese community, Chamorro community, Chuukese community, and more to present about their culture and also share signature cuisines that will be shared with the people in attendance.

The event will have a meet-and-greet, traditional displays of arts and crafts from every ethnicity, cuisine tasting, followed by a roadside waving. They will also have performances that includes a Miss Earth fashion show and performances from the Filipino, Chamorro, Chinese, Chuukese, and Japanese communities.

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BECQ, MINA support bill banning single-use plastic

By IVA MAURIN

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REPORTER

The Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality is backing a Senate bill that would ban single-use plastic bags in the CNMI.

Senate Bill 21-31, authored by Sen. Vinnie Sablan (Ind-Saipan) would prohibit the importation and production of single-use plastic bags and bar businesses from providing single-use plastic check-out bags.

“Long have we accepted the path of convenience—plastics,

polystyrene. It has managed to creep into a lot of households and business facilities...because it is cheap and easy to maintain,” said BECQ’s Division of Environmental Quality director Jonathan Arriola. “We feel that it’s time to make a decision to take an alternative route that will lead us toward a sustainable future.”

BECQ, through its Division of Coastal Resources Management, already has a Plastic-Free Marianas program, meant to help businesses identify ways to cut back on the use of plastic.

In the CNMI, five of the top 10 trash collected at the last International Coastal Cleanup were plastic.

Responding to apprehensions from the business community, in terms of enforcements, inspections, and penalties, Sablan clarified that the proposed ban is not meant to burden businesses.

“The intent of the bill is really not to burden the business establishments, but to promote a positive change in the behavior of the consumer. There are alternatives, this is a small step, a very small step into

moving into something bigger,” Sablan said.

Micronesia Islands Nature Alliance executive director Roberta Guerrero has already expressed support for the bill, stating that the ban on single-use plastic bags is a step in the right direction.

Guerrero, however, said that incentivizing the bill, rather than putting in place punitive measures, will move it through

the community much more quickly and would generate a stronger community support.

In a survey conducted by BECQ and MINA at the Flame Tree Festival asking if people would support regulations to ban single-use plastics in the CNMI, 75.2% of the 652 responses said yes.

World Wildlife Fund’s global plastic report predicts that, unless something is done, the

rate of plastic pollution will double by 2030. Currently, the world generates 300 million tons of plastic waste every year.

More than 120 countries all over the world had banned plastic bags by the end of 2019. In the U.S., New York is the latest to join the ban in the distribution of single-use plastic bags, with officials saying that 23 billion plastic bags are used in the state each year.

CCA holds health outreach in Kagman



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Commonwealth Cancer Association and its health partners held a health outreach at the Kagman Community Center last Wednesday, Feb. 26.

The Commonwealth Cancer Association held a health outreach at the Kagman Community Center last Wednesday, Feb. 26, 2020, to educate the public about its programs and to allow people to avail of health services on site.

Those services included blood pressure readings and blood glucose test. There was also information on the Commonwealth Office of Transport Authority and their sliding fees, fire safety tips, and Integrated Behavioral Health Services. Medicare patients were assisted in obtaining Medicare cards, and some saw the oral cancer documentary, Chew.

This was the second Health

& Wellness village outreach of CCA and was done with the Kagman Community Health Center, the Division of Public Health, Comprehensive Cancer Control program, the Division of Youth Services, and the Department of Fire and Emergency Management Services.

The outreach was also an opportunity for CCA to inform the community about the upcoming 2020 Marianas March Against Cancer event.

The major focuses of the outreach were:

1. To avail and respond to immediate individual health and wellness needs;
2. To provide opportunities for people to learn more about

the CCA and its partners programs and services; and

3. To involve residents at the village-level in the discussion of ideas and recommendations on how to better address health and wellness in the community.

A 3rd Health & Wellness Village Outreach is being planned for Wednesday, March 25, 2020, from 4:30pm to 6:30pm at the Carolinian Utt.

For more information, contact CCA at 682-0050 or via email at ccamarianas@gmail.com, or visit www.ccamarianas.org. You can also visit the CCA office at the Gualo Rai Plaza Building, along Chalan Pale Arnold Middle Road in Gualo Rai. (PR)

McFun 5K Run draws 200-plus runners

More than 200 runners participated in the Rotary Club of Saipan’s 6th Annual McFun 5K Run last Feb. 22, according to club president Marcia Ayuyu last Tuesday.

Speaking at the club’s weekly meeting at Hyatt Regency Saipan last Tuesday, Ayuyu said a total of 259 runners took part in the event, involving 215 pre-registered adults, six pre-registered under 19, 24 walk-in adults, and 14 walk-in under 19.

The 5-kilometer run started at the Carolinian Utt in Garapan and had its turnaround at the Star Water Co.

“It was an amazing turnout! I am very grateful for the sponsors and staffs for the successful event, thank you very much!” said Ayuyu.

TanHoldings Corp. and McDonald’s Saipan were the event’s main sponsors. The others sponsors were Duty-Free Shoppers, Megabyte, Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan, Bank of Guam, Hyatt Regency Saipan, Bridge Capital, Micronesian Broker, D&Q, Kanoa Resort, Pacific Islands Club, Laolao Bay Golf and Resort, Grandvrio Resort, Aqua Resort, National Office Supply, Matson, Ya-

ong, Century Hotel, I Love Saipan, Marpac, Great Harvest Bakery, Pacific Trading, Coca Cola, Triple J Wholesale, and iShop.

Ayuyu also thanked Robin Sapong, secretary general of the Northern Marianas Athletics, and his team for keeping track of the runners’ time.

The Rotary Club started its McFun 5K Run in 2015 and is now on its sixth year. Ayuyu also announced at the meeting that their inaugural Rotary Easter Egg Hunt set for April 4 at Sugar King Park. More information will be announced later. (Krizel Tuazon)



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INVITATION FOR BIDS ITB20-GOV-064

Supply and Installation of Desk Cubicles for the Office of Management and Budget, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and Capital Improvement Program

The project package will be available for pick up at the Hazard Mitigation Office located at the Office of the Governor in Capitol Hill, Saipan beginning **Thursday, March 5, 2020. All interested bidders are required to include an Insurer Certification Clearance (ICC) in their bid packages in order to bid on this project. The ICC should be obtained at the Department of Commerce, Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) on Capitol Hill.**

There will be a pre-bid conference for this project on **Monday, March 16, 2020 10:00 am ChST** at the Hazard Mitigation Office Conference Room located at the Office of the Governor, Capitol Hill, Saipan. Questions concerning this project shall be directed to Ms. Tiana Reyes in writing by e-mail to treyes@omb.gov.mp or fax to (670) 664-2408 on or before **Thursday, March 19, 2020. All responses to inquiries will be shared with all prospective bidders.**

Sealed bids must be marked **ITB20-GOV-064 Supply and Installation of Desk Cubicles for the Office of Management and Budget, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and Capital Improvement Program.** For bidders within the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply located at the former Emergency Management Office, Building No. 1301, Ascension Drive, Capitol Hill on Saipan no later than **10:00 a.m. ChST April 2, 2020.** Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to Bid. Notices of Intent to Bid must be received by the Director of Procurement & Supply no later than **10:00 a.m. ChST April 2, 2020** and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to a.magofna@dof.gov.mp. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than **April 2, 2020** and mailed to the **Director of Procurement and Supply at P.O. BOX 510008 C.K., Saipan MP, 96950** and the bid documents must be received no later than **April 15, 2020.** Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly open and read at the Division of Procurement and Supply located at the former Emergency Management Office, Building No. 1301, Ascension Drive, Capitol Hill on Saipan at **10:00 a.m. ChST, April 15, 2020.** However, if no notices of intent to bid are received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be open at **10:00 a.m. ChST, April 2, 2020.**

Bids will be publicly open and read at the Division of Procurement and Supply located at the former Emergency Management Office, Building No. 1301, Ascension Drive, Capitol Hill on Saipan at 10:00 a.m. ChST, April 15, 2020. However, if no notices of intent to bid are received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be open at 10:00 a.m. ChST, April 2, 2020.

The government reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, in whole or in part, and to waive any imperfection in a proposal if in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All proposals shall become the property of the CNMI government.

Virginia C. Villagomez
Governor’s Authorized Representative

Francisco C. Aguon, Acting Director
CNMI Procurement & Supply

MCS to host Family Movie Night

Mount Carmel School will host a Family Movie Night tomorrow, Friday, March 4, in the school’s central quad, featuring family-friendly short films as well as the film premiere of the school’s 2019 production of *Tasi*.

Inspired by Disney’s *Moana*, *Tasi* was an original story written by club adviser and school president Dr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero, that follows Tasi as she struggles between family expectations, traditions, and her own aspirations. Featuring music from and about the islands, last year’s performances of *Tasi* sold out on all nights and proved to be a crowd favorite

Tasi was directed by Kalea Borja, who said she was excited to “present our local culture. I believe that we need to promote our local culture and embrace it, and *Tasi* did just that!”

“Just like our islands were ‘Marianas Strong’ in recovering from the typhoon, our cast and crew members were ‘Knight Strong’ in pushing through with the show,” she added.

The school has established a strong film and theatre program, with over 50 productions being presented over the past two decades, including Disney musicals, plays by William Shakespeare, and numerous original productions, including the award-winning

films in the *We Drank Our Tears* series.

Deleon Guerrero invites all members of the community to enjoy themselves at the Family Movie Night. “We will have chairs and benches available, but feel free to bring a blanket, sleeping bags, or lawn chairs, and lounge out as we feature films for the whole family.”

Admission for the movie night is \$5 and the movies run from 7pm to about 9pm. In the event of rain, the venue will be moved to the school’s auditorium. For more information, call 234-6184 or visit www.mountcarmelsaipan.com. (PR)

'My *desire* is to make the *most* of each day'

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT



Kanae Quinn and her husband, Russ.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Urban Dictionary calls a woman who knows how to do everything as a "jill of all trades." Sort of like the female version of the "jack of all trades."

The CNMI's own jill of all trades has a name and she is Kanae S. Quinn. She has been involved in various fields and skills that include consulting, fitness, education and training, community outreach, and marriage counseling.

But Quinn is quick to point out that living and everyday life should be more about quality and not just sheer quantity. "My motivation stems from my desire to make the most of each day. Sometimes, it's not a lot as quality has become much more valuable than quantity," she said.

"...My daily goal is not to do as many things in a day as possible, but rather, do the most important things on a particular day. ...Balance is essential and has become easier to attain as I have grown older. I have come to realize that time is the greatest asset and we have to utilize it wisely..." she added.

If Quinn is to put a feather in her cap after each accomplishment, she will need many caps.

She manages her time at Quinn Consulting, LLC doing hospitality and events consulting service; at Marianas Fitness Ltd. as part-owner of a gym where she teaches spin class; as a hospitality and career training instructor at Latte Training Academy; as a board member for Make-A-Wish Guam and CNMI where she has been with for six years now; and Worldwide Marriage Encounter, helping CNMI couples and families enhance their relationships.

"I don't necessarily believe there are advantages in being a woman who works in various industries. If you're an individual with diverse interests, it's a good way to meet and work with lots of different people," she said.

"As a teacher of hospitality classes to high school students, my passion is to impress upon them that being a kind, honest individual with integrity are essential to becoming a great employee. ...A person's character speaks loudly of how he or she will perform in anything he or she accomplishes. Commitment, love and empathy are traits I endeavor to instill in myself," she added.

After achieving so many goals in different fields, Quinn boils down her idea of excellence in woman to relationships that are built with others. "My view of 'women of excellence' may not necessarily conform to the norm. A person who has achieved a certain level of financial success or a prestigious position, title, or award is not always an excellent woman," she said. "An excellent woman values relationships and time with family and friends. She's not 'too busy' for you. She's kind, willing to help others, is a good listener and one you want to invite for parties as she's fun as well."

Over the years and after many projects and events, Merlie Torres Tolentino still manages to keep all moving parts of the

Tan Siu Lin Foundation together by keeping her sight on the prize—ensuring that the foundation keeps working toward the greater good of the CNMI.

"Knowing that my line of work is not only limited to my own financial stability or personal interest but [has] ripple effects on the lives of others that I get to touch in the organizations that I work with makes each day worth the hassle," she said.

Tolentino, who works with a board of directors as executive director of the TSL Foundation, said it is easy to get caught up in the idea of working for the sake of just earning "but every work day becomes meaningful once you realize how your work transcends and contributes to the betterment of society, and other sectors that we are working with."

Aside from the foundation, Tolentino also plays active roles in organizations such as the Northern Mariana Islands Football Association, Northern Marianas Badminton Association, Asian Football Confederation, East Asian Football Association, and Pacific Century Fellows.

"It's true what they say to 'Find a job that you love to do, and you never have to work a day in your life.' It might sound cheesy but loving what you do, your work, and all that entails makes everything [run] smooth[ly]," she said. "It also helps to be surrounded by family and friends who are supportive, proud of what I do, and understand my line of work and responsibilities. It is because of this that I never really had a major problem in balancing my personal life and my career."

In January this year, at the annual gala of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, the TSL Foundation was recognized as the 2019 Non-Profit of the Year for its many charitable acts, events, and projects that help uplift individuals and families in the CNMI.

"...It is great to be recognized by business people. All of us are working hard, whether in business or charitable works, to help the CNMI. ... I hope that I get to inspire others with what I do," Tolentino said.

"I hope that my hard work somehow inspires others to give their all in any job that they do. ... At the TSL Foundation, we do not only work for ourselves, for the company, or to support our families. Whatever our line of work is, it should always bend toward helping to improve the society that we live in, no matter how small or big our contributions may be. I hope I get to deliver that message to many through my job each day," she added.

EYES ON THE PRIZE:

The greater good of the CNMI

By BEA CABRERA
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CORRESPONDENT



"I want to create initiatives for women empowerment in the workplace," said Tan Siu Lin Foundation executive director Merlie Tolentino.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

Kobe and Gianna Bryant's crash site isn't a souvenir stand for sheriff's deputies

The word that best describes it is "unconscionable." A sheriff's deputy acquires a sensitive photo of human remains from a tragic helicopter crash, walks into a bar, pulls up the photo on his phone and shows it off. Was it some kind of sick pickup line?

He apparently wasn't the only one. The Times has reported that several other LA County sheriff's deputies have been sharing graphic photos of the Jan. 26 helicopter crash that killed retired NBA star Kobe Bryant, his daughter Gianna and seven others.

Many fans who loved Bryant sought to express their grief by buying Lakers jerseys and other memorabilia, and that's perfectly understandable. But photos of human remains are not souvenirs, and sharing them does not express affection or grief—especially when the people doing the sharing are sworn law enforcement officers who presumably are trained to meet a higher standard of professional conduct.

In the immediate aftermath of the crash, Sheriff Alex Villanueva scolded a news outlet for reporting Bryant's death before the Sheriff's Department could notify the victims' families. The sheriff called the action "disrespectful" and "inappropriate"—as indeed it was, although no rule or law requires the delay of accurate reporting on grounds of simple human decency.

But presumably there are indeed rules of professional conduct that govern the gathering and sharing of crime-scene or disaster photos by law enforcement officers, whether those photos were part of an official investigation or just looky-loo snaps taken by first responders.

The sheriff used the right words again when describing the photo sharing, according to news reports: Inexcusable. Unconscionable. Bryant's widow, Vanessa Bryant said through her attorney that she was "devastated" by the insensitive gathering and sharing of photos.

So who took the pictures and how many deputies carried them around on their phones? Whom did they show them to? Did any deputy offer to sell them? Or were deputies just showing off? Do department rules and training cover sharing sensitive photos and documents?

Villanueva promised a full investigation—but as The Times reported on Feb. 28, he also said that deputies who come forward, admit having the photos and delete them would not be disciplined.

Perhaps the sheriff sees that as the best way to nip the problem in the bud, but it doesn't tell the public how common a problem this kind of thing is in the department, why deputies believed such actions were acceptable or how many deputies were involved.

An investigation should go forward, but the public would be better served if it were conducted by the inspector general and the Civilian Oversight Commission, and not just by the Sheriff's Department itself.

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BEST WAY TO CLEAR A TRUMP RALLY



Coronavirus crisis victims in China aren't just humans

The human toll that the coronavirus is taking in China is repeatedly updated in news reports. But there are a growing number of victims that we hear little about who can't speak for themselves.

They are the estimated 50,000 dogs, cats and other pets left in limbo in the Wuhan region because their owners left for the Chinese New Year and were barred from returning due to the quarantine.

This has given rise to a new breed of hero there as animal advocates risk their lives by defying coronavirus restrictions to visit homes at the request of absent occupants to give food and water to their starving pets.

Yi Ping Lai, a U.S. businesswoman since 1978 who imports goods for China, cites China social media which is full of stories of high-rise apartment dwellers extending poles or cables to deliver food and water through windows of buildings across from them to feed someone's stranded pet.

She lives in La Costa and is doing what she can to aid these animals in crisis. During recent business trips to China, Lai noticed more and more abandoned dogs on the streets, where they are subject to starvation, freezing temperatures and being brutally snatched for the dog meat trade. "When I'm there, I sometimes find homes for dogs on the street," she says.

Last July, Lai and her friend Molly Wang, of Rancho Bernardo, launched their nonprofit World of Angels Foundation to rescue homeless dogs and cats in China, give them shelter and work on getting them adopted. "I have two dogs myself, so I love dogs," Lai explains. "I'd been wondering, how can I help dogs in China?"

She sought advice from PAWS of Coronado in early August. China isn't part of the pet rescue group's mission, but PAWS management noted that its previous director gave Lai and Wang advice and explained how shelters work.

With the outbreak of the coronavirus, the animals' plight has worsened as local authorities, especially in rural villages, have been photographed killing stray dogs because villagers fear they could carry the disease.

Lai and Wang built a dog sanctuary near Wuhan last May to help a woman who has dedicated her life to caring for the orphaned canines in a facility she recently was forced to leave. When the government announced the quarantine with no notice, kennel workers were forbidden to leave their houses to come to work. Luckily, one woman lives at the sanctuary, Lai says. She has been caring for all of its 190 dogs by herself for the past

By **DIANE BELL**

The San Diego Union-Tribune

Diane Bell is a columnist for the San Diego Union-Tribune.

several weeks.

The two San Diegans, through their foundation, have been working with six sanctuaries started by animal advocates around China which, unlike the United States, doesn't have government-funded animal shelters.

The sanctuaries house 1,300 dogs, Lai says, and she and Wang are anxious to save more. Even before the virus outbreak, they had plans to add a second floor to the shelter near Wuhan to accommodate 80 more dogs. They're hoping to raise \$5,000 for construction, which could be completed in 10 days. The coronavirus has compounded the urgency.

"We get an overwhelming number of calls from pet owners begging for help," Lai says. Plus, many stray dogs lived on scraps of food scavenged from the trash of restaurants and grocery stores, which now are closed.

To date, the women have used their personal funds to support their project. "But the scale of the problem is overwhelming," Lai says. "No individual can have enough money to solve it. We need public support to have an impact." The World Health Organization estimates there are about 40 million homeless dogs in China. "When the quarantine is over, there will be a lot of suffering dogs we will need to take under our care to save," she says.

Josh Carandang, of San Jose, Calif., adopted the first dog they brought back to the United States, a young Samoyed mix who had been chained outside a meat factory. "I really believe in their organization and what they are trying to do," he said.

Jim Healy, a former San Diego Union-Tribune copy editor who now works at the national China Daily in Beijing, is unfamiliar with Lai's Wuhan area sanctuary. However he confirmed that pet care has been a problem. "Many people left for the holiday and were unable to return as planned," Healy said. "Early on in the crisis, I even saw pleas from people urging folks not to abandon their pets due to the unfounded fear that animals are spreading the virus (absolutely no evidence they are)."

Mayor Pete Buttigieg's run was proof that America can and does evolve toward goodness

If you want a reminder that America can and does move toward the right, just thing, look no further than Sunday.

South Bend, Ind., Mayor Pete Buttigieg ended his run for president, but not before making history by winning Iowa—the first openly gay candidate to do so.

Lori Lightfoot, Chicago's first openly gay mayor, tweeted her support Sunday evening.

"I am deeply proud of the campaign that @PeteButtigieg ran," Lightfoot wrote. "Today, Mayor Pete closed one door, but as the first openly gay candidate to win presidential delegates he opened countless others for LGBTQ+ candidates across the nation."

"We eagerly await your next move, @PeteButtigieg—maybe after a few weeks of rest," she continued. "The urgency of the moment means that we will not stop needing your public service anytime soon."

In his speech announcing the end of his run, Buttigieg had this to say: "We sent a message to every kid out there wondering if whatever marks them out as different means they are somehow destined to be less than: Someone who once felt that exact same way can become a leading American presidential candidate—with his husband at his side."

This all was practically unimaginable not so long ago.

As recently as 2004, U.S. Senate candidate Barack Obama still opposed same-sex marriage.

"Marriage is between a man and a woman," Obama told WTTW at the time. "But what I also believe is that we have an

obligation to make sure that gays and lesbians have the rights of citizenship that afford them visitations to hospitals, that allow them to transfer property to each other, to make sure they're not discriminated against on the job.

"I don't think marriage is a civil right," he added.

By 2010, Obama talked about his views beginning to shift. "Attitudes evolve, including mine," he said during an interview with America Blog. And I think that it is an issue that I wrestle with and think about because I have a whole host of friends who are in gay partnerships. I have staff members who are in committed, monogamous relationships, who are raising children, who are wonderful parents."

Obama went on to champion LGBTQ rights during his time in the White House. He repealed "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" in 2011, instructed the Justice Department not to enforce the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act (which was signed into law by then-president Bill Clinton) and celebrated the Supreme Court's 2015 ruling that legalized gay marriage by lighting the White House in rainbow colors.

People change. Countries change.

But not without the courage of people living their truth out loud—embracing their spouses on stages (political and otherwise), even when those spouses happen to be the same sex, refusing to accept separate but equal (which is never really equal), advocating for inclusion and justice for all.

Buttigieg did that.

And though he's no longer on a path to the White House (yet),

By **HEIDI STEVENS**

Chicago Tribune

Heidi Stevens is a lifestyle columnist for the Chicago Tribune.



his presence and his reception are reminders that America is not stuck in place. America's heart can expand and embrace what it once feared and rejected.

Buttigieg listed his campaign's "rules of the road" during Sunday's speech.

"Respect, belonging, truth, teamwork, boldness, responsibility, substance, discipline, excellence and joy," he said. "Every decision we made was guided by those values."

He talked about politics as a force for good.

"Leaders can call out either what is best in us or what is worst in us, can draw us either to our better or to our worse selves," he said. "Politics at its worst is ugly. But at its best, politics can lift us up. It is not just policymaking, it is moral. It is soul craft."

He continued: "I firmly believe that in these years, in our time, we can and will make American life in politics more like what it could be," he said. "Not just more wise and more prosperous, but more equitable and more just and more decent."

I believe his candidacy did just that. And I believe America will take what he started and learn from it, build on it and, ultimately, grow toward our better selves because of it. We've already started to.

Hey, all you face-touchers out there, in an age of coronavirus—just stop!

Stop touching your face.

I mean it! Stop. Touching. Your. Face.

Did you just touch your face?

You probably did. I'd bet 82% of readers have touched their face since beginning this column. I know this because it's almost impossible for the average person to go half a minute without wiping their eyes or their nose or their mouth, without scratching their cheek or their brow or their chin, without indulging in the compulsive hand-to-face behaviors that remind us we're not that far removed from the chimpanzees.

OK, I exaggerate. According to one study, the average person touches their face 23 times an hour, which is only every 2.6 minutes.

If you've been paying attention to the coronavirus news—who can avoid it?—then you know that there are a couple of things you, as a concerned citizen, can do to diminish the risk of catching this global killer.

The first is to wash your hands, thoroughly and often. Sing "Happy Birthday" two times through before you stop. Don't forget your fingernails. Don't dry on that dirty towel.

The other top preventive measure? The one that's less familiar and so much harder? Stop touching your face.

(Uh-oh. Just as I finished the previous sentence, my inner chimpanzee forced me to gently scratch my forehead.)

The edict on face-touching shouldn't be hard to obey. And yet it is. It's like hearing, "Don't think of an elephant." Or, if you're me, it's like hearing, "Don't eat all the M&Ms in the bag." Tell me not to do it, and reflexively I will.

I'm a face-toucher in any season—I cup my chin when I'm thinking, I wipe my eyes, I rub my nose—but it's only now, in the rat-a-tat-tat of coronavirus warnings that I've become self-conscious about it. At least I'm in good company, which I know because on Friday I saw a CNN video clip of former Vice President Joe Biden talking about the virus. Twice, within a minute or so, he brushed the area above his lip with a forefinger, first the right forefinger, then the left. His rhetoric was good, but his body language called for instant quarantine.

Not touching your face isn't a novel health warning. It's a standard admonition when we talk of ways to prevent colds and the flu.

But it's rarely issued as loudly as it has been in the days since it became clear that the coronavirus has jumped American borders.

(Uh-oh. My inner chimp made me wipe my right eye after writing that sentence.)

When you start thinking about not touching your face, you begin to think of all the things you touch before your hands make it to your face. Filthy door handles, gross elevator buttons, gooey turnstiles, snot-encrusted bus poles.

Long before we'd heard of the coronavirus, I'd trained myself to negotiate those surfaces whenever possible with my elbows, knuckles or forearms instead of my palms or fingertips. Even so, in a coronavirus age, that doesn't seem safe enough. Some invisible scourge could easily make it onto your hands.

So how to stop face-touching? The internet offers various primers, some of them created for teenagers with acne, but the principles apply to coronavirus prevention too. Unfortunately, these tips aren't as easy to follow as they sound.

Keep your hands busy.

OK, I'm doing that right now—I'm typing. And yet somehow my chin just wound up cupped in my hand while my index finger rubbed the side of my face. And who knows what toxin lives on this keyboard.

Substitute touching your face with another behavior.

By **MARY SCHMICH**

Chicago Tribune

Mary Schmich is a columnist for the Chicago Tribune and winner of the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for commentary.



Like what? Eating more M&Ms?

Wear gloves.

Nope.

Sit on your hands while you're sitting.

Not a useful tip for people who earn their living writing.

Identify your triggers to help you anticipate temptation. If you touch your face when you're stressed or anxious, meditate.

My inner chimp just made me wipe my eyes after reading about stress. But om.

Post notes reminding yourself not to touch your face—on your computer, at your desk, in the car.

Hmm. That may be worth a try because, really, we need to stop touching our faces. My inner chimp will try if yours will. Good luck.

T.O.A.S.T.: Tender Old Age Sonnet Tales

Lemons Make Lemonade—Citrus Clemency

"Let us use it while we may; snatch those joys that haste away."
—Italian poet Giovanni Battista Guarini writing on Beauty

How often I would sin and how sour my lemonade
Then your sweetness and light like honey would invade
Then my transgressions and "my bad" would fade
Your heartfelt homily helps me call a spade a spade
All the wrong roads I took all the wrong paths I trod
Ultimately led to thorny beds of roses I swear to God
As though the steep stairway to heaven resembled
A throng of angels with love and kindness assembled
The orange grove the lemon bushes unripe and sour
Now kissed by sunny disposition and the light of love
Grow stronger and sweeter by the day and by the hour
Blessed by radiant reality from high in heaven above
Look homeward my angel shed your love light on me
Long dead those kind words said shall now set me free.

Twisting Turns Into Torrid Tango

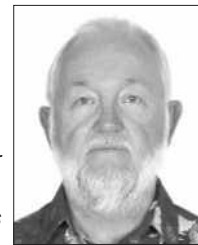
*"Then come to me in dreams, my love
I will not ask a dearer bliss;
Come with the starry beams, my love
And press mine eyelids with thy kiss."*

LITERARY NOOK

By **JOEY CONNOLLY**

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Joey aka Pepe Batbon is a retired educator who taught in the CNMI, NOLA, and LVNV. He is a sonnet practitioner who enjoys stargazing.



—Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, author of *Frankenstein*

Please go with me to the dance tonight my love
we'll dance the dirty boogie and do the Twist
hear the Platters and Chubby Checker from above
end each slow dance with a slow French kiss
I'll make you blueberry pancakes for breakfast
with butter and syrup from the Vermont Maid
we'll drink some hot cocoa then go take a rest
after we get a motel and the bill has been paid
we may not be able get any sleep at all tonight
wrapped tight in each others arms we will be
changing positions first to the left then right
first I'll do this to you, then you do that to me
come with me to the dance so we can unwind
we'll boogie bump and grind and lose our mind.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A bigger natural disaster

The coronavirus outbreak and its impact on the Mariana Islands is a natural disaster of perhaps larger import than Super Typhoon Yutu.

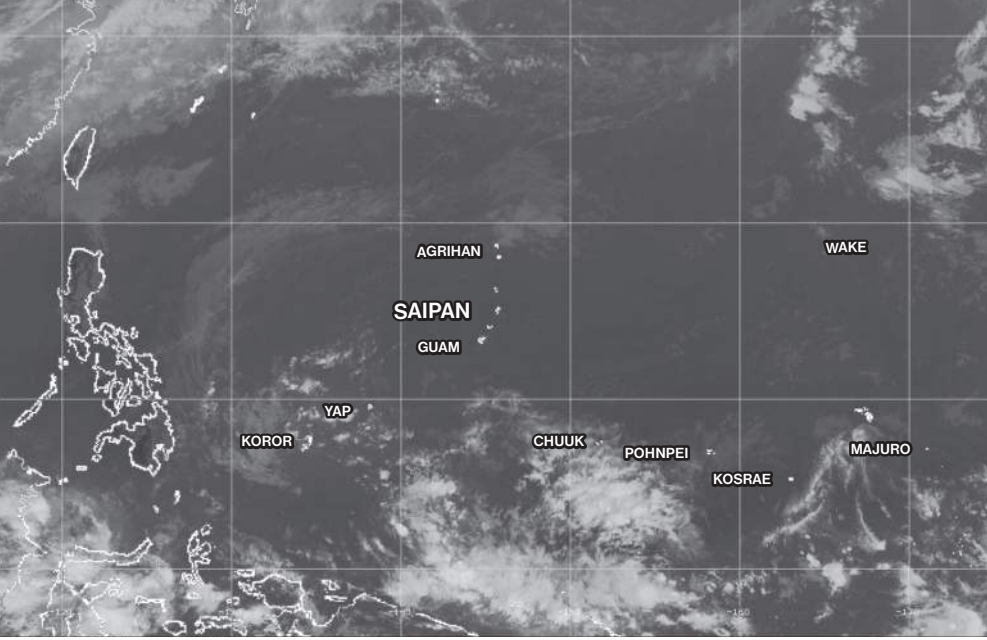
The Marianas should receive the same support from the Federal Emergency Management Agency as they did for Yutu, if they can adapt to a new form of natural disaster.

Don Farrell

Marpo Heights, Tinian

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY		SUNDAY		MONDAY	
Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.		Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers.		Partly cloudy with isolated showers.		Partly cloudy with isolated showers.		Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	
87°	75°	87°	76°	87°	76°	87°	77°	87°	76°
YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									



PICTURE TIME: 4:55 AM, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2020
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A dry trade-wind pattern will continue to dominate the weather well into next week. Model estimates of 10 day accumulated precipitation range from a third to a half of an inch. Winds will weaken late in the week and into the weekend as a frontal system well to the north breaks up the subtropical ridge.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA			▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	85° / 75°	
Palau	Partly Cloudy	85° / 78°	
Yap	Partly Cloudy	86° / 80°	
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	86° / 81°	
Pohnpei	Windy	86° / 79°	
Kosrae	Windy	86° / 79°	
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	85° / 80°	

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Showers	70° / 63°	
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	52° / 32°	
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	72° / 66°	
Honolulu	Showers	79° / 69°	
London	Showers	46° / 36°	
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	77° / 56°	
Manila	Partly Cloudy	91° / 77°	
Melbourne	Showers	66° / 57°	
Miami	Partly Cloudy	84° / 73°	
New York	Mostly Sunny	54° / 41°	
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	52° / 37°	
Paris	Showers	52° / 39°	
Busan	Sunny	54° / 43°	
Rome	Showers	57° / 45°	
Salem	Rain	58° / 45°	
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	59° / 47°	
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	48° / 30°	
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	55° / 41°	
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	57° / 39°	

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
5:23 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.52	
10:10 AM	LOW TIDE	1.18	
2:52 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.56	
10:37 PM	LOW TIDE	-0.17	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:31 AM	6:25 PM
Friday	6:30 AM	6:25 PM
Saturday	6:30 AM	6:25 PM
Sunday	6:29 AM	6:26 PM
Monday	6:28 AM	6:26 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	2:20 AM	1:53 PM
Friday	-	3:17 AM	2:53 PM
Saturday	-	4:13 AM	3:55 PM
Sunday	-	5:08 AM	4:58 PM
Monday	-	6:00 AM	6:02 PM

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 6, 2020							
DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	9:15am	9:55am	Daily	UA174	7:30am	8:11am	Daily
UA156	6:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6	UA112	4:45pm	5:26pm	2, 4, 6
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
SKY816	4:35pm	7:30pm	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7	SKY811	10:15am	3:00pm	Daily
SKY816	5:05pm	8:00pm	6				
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)				BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
7C3451	3:20am	6:30am	Daily	7C3452	9:35pm	2:30am+1	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
				7C3452	10:05pm	2:30am+1	3
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)				SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308	2:05am	6:05am	Daily	OZ6233	7:30am	12:50pm	2, 4, 6
OZ626	2:10am	6:05am	1	OZ623	8:10am	1:40pm	1, 3, 5, 7
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 5, 6, 7	7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ626	3:35am	7:20am	4	TW309	11:10am	4:40pm	Daily
7C3403	4:35am	8:35am	Daily	OZ625	7:30pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ6243	3:10pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6	TW307	7:45pm	1:05am+1	Daily
OZ624	3:30pm	7:20pm	1, 3, 5, 7	OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 4, 5, 6
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily	OZ625	9:05pm	2:25am+1	3
TW310	5:40pm	10:15pm	Daily	7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
OZ626/701	2:10am	10:35am	1 via ICN	UA189/174	12:40am	8:11am+1	3, 6 via GUM
OZ626/701	2:50am	10:35am	2, 3, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ702/625	12:05pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
UA117/183	9:15am	9:50pm	Daily via GUM	OZ702/625	12:05pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA117/193	9:15am	11:50pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR	OZ702/625	12:05pm	2:25am+1	3 via ICN
UA156/183	6:20pm	9:50pm	Daily via GUM	UA192/174	10:40pm	8:11am+1	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
UA156/193	6:20pm	11:50pm	2 via GUM-ROR	UA184/174	10:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
				OZ704/6233	11:45pm	12:50pm+1	2, 4, 6 via ICN
				OZ704/623	11:45pm	1:40pm+1	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN
				OZ704/6233	11:45pm	12:50pm+1	2, 4, 6 via ICN
				OZ704/623	11:45pm	1:40pm+1	1, 3 via ICN
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)				HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN	OZ746/6233	12:35am	12:50pm	2, 4, 6 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ746/623	12:35am	1:40pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN
OZ626/721	3:35am	11:50am	4 via ICN	OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ6243/9661	3:10pm	11:15pm	2, 4, 6 via ICN	OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ624/9661	3:30pm	11:15pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN	OZ722/625	1:15pm	2:25am+1	3 via ICN
LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, BC SkyMark ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. (The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)							
STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.							
SAIPAN TO ROTA				1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily	1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily	1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily	1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
				1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
ROTA TO SAIPAN				1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily	1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily	1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily				
				TINIAN TO SAIPAN			
ROTA TO GUAM				FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily	2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
				2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
GUAM TO ROTA				2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily	2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
				2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
SAIPAN TO TINIAN				2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily	2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily	2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
				2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

Business

IN FACE OF COVID-19

DOCOMO PACIFIC

prioritizes health, safety of employees, customers

TAMUNING, Guam—DOCOMO PACIFIC, regional leader in innovation, telecommunications, and entertainment, prioritizes the health and safety of its employees and customers in the face of COVID-19.

The level of concern surrounding the spread of COVID-19 continues to rise. At DOCOMO PACIFIC, the company recognizes the impact it has on the communities we serve and want to ensure you that our response will remain proactive.

"In this time of uncertainty our highest priority is the well-being of our employees. At the same time we stand ready to assist our customers with the technology and communication tools needed to work remotely and continue to be safe and productive," said DOCOMO PACIFIC president and CEO Rod Boss.

NTT DOCOMO Japan, the sole shareholder of DOCOMO PACIFIC has encouraged its 200,000 group employees in Japan to make use of telework and off-peak commuting as of Monday, Feb. 23, 2020. Remote work is experiencing a boost as more people avoid physical gatherings where the likelihood of contamination is higher.

While there are no known cases of COVID-19 on Guam nor the CNMI, DOCOMO PACIFIC is exercising caution to protect our associates and customers:

Employees who feel ill are encouraged to stay home.

DOCOMO PACIFIC is taking steps to ensure a clean and hygienic workplace—surfaces, desks, tables and objects are to be wiped down and disinfected regularly in our offices and stores.

Hand sanitizer dispensers will be deployed to the stores and will be filled regularly.

Posters promoting proper hand-washing have been displayed in office restrooms and employee gathering spaces.

All staff and contractors are asked to wash their hands with soap and water.

Face masks, tissues, closed trash bins and hand sanitizer will be available in our offices for those who develop a runny nose or cough at work.

For our customers, your health and safety is paramount. Here's what DOCOMO PACIFIC is doing for you:

DOCOMO PACIFIC taking every precaution to increase the standard of hygiene in our stores. However, if you prefer to manage your account without a physical visit, you can



MARK RABAGO
File photo shows the DOCOMO PACIFIC main office on Saipan in Gualo Rai.

manage your account online by signing up for Self-Care.

If work from home is implemented by your employer, DOCOMO PACIFIC also has a few tips for a productive experience:

Audit your internet connection and speed.

Ensure you have the proper

tools and devices necessary for remote work.

Set up a VPN if required.

Ensure remote desktop access if applicable.

Separate your business chat and email from your personal platforms for added business security.

DOCOMO PACIFIC is

a wholly owned subsidiary of NTT DOCOMO, Japan's leading mobile operator. Headquartered in Tamuning, Guam, DOCOMO PACIFIC is the largest provider of personal, residential, enterprise connectivity and entertainment services in Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands.

As the four-time winner of Pika's Best of Guam and three-time winner of Best of The Pacific, DOCOMO PACIFIC is dedicated to bringing you and your family closer to the things that matter most. Get to know more about what makes us "Better Together" at www.docomopacific.com. (PR)

Trade show blues: Exhibitions go virtual as virus spreads

FRANKFURT, Germany (AP)—Fine wines and hipster gin. Hunting rifles and knives. Contemporary paintings and million-dollar sports cars. They're all marketed at trade events that are quickly going dark across the globe due to the new coronavirus—and taking with them sales opportunities that may be difficult to make up.

Some companies are taking their shows online with virtual events they stream from their headquarters to reach customers anyway.

But marketing experts and executives warn that there is no substitute for face-to-face contact with potential clients, as exhibition companies try to total up the losses being suffered by an industry that also pumps billions into hotels, restaurants and cabdriver's wallets.

The Geneva International Motor Show resorted to putting automakers' product unveilings and news conferences online Tuesday after this year's show was canceled. BMW presented its sleek i4 electric concept car at a digital news conference from Munich, while

competitors Daimler and Volkswagen held their own online events.

The Geneva show was cancelled after local authorities barred gatherings of more than 1,000 people to halt the spread of the virus, which has sickened over 90,000 people globally and led to 3,100 deaths as of Tuesday. While some car companies were already trying online presentations before the virus in an effort to expand their reach to social media, there is no real substitute to seeing a product in person or meeting people in the industry.

"It's not just about purchases. For many products it is also about reinforcing a kind of community building," said Gernot Gehrke, professor of management and event-industry marketing at the University of Applied Sciences and Arts Hanover.

Trade shows, which can bring sales long after the event, are "a point of contact in a customer journey, if you like, that aims at a stable relationship to customers, and also to people and organizations that might become customers."

Looking for hand sanitizer? Good luck finding it

NEW YORK (AP)—The hand sanitizers on Amazon were overpriced. A Walmart this weekend was completely sold out. Only on his third try was Ken Smith able to find the clear gel—at a Walgreens, where three bottles of Purell were left. He bought two.

"I didn't want to hoard," says Smith, a retired biomedical technician in Wichita Falls, Texas.

Fear of the coronavirus has led people to stock up on the germ-killing gel, leaving store shelves empty and online retailers with sky-high prices set by those trying to profit on the rush. More is on the way, although it's not clear how long it will take retailers to restock.

Sales of hand sanitizers in the U.S. were up 73% in the four weeks ending Feb. 22 compared to the same period a year ago, according to market research firm Nielsen.

The alcohol-based gunk is convenient, but hand sanitizer isn't the best way to clean your hands. For that, soap and water still reigns supreme, ac-

cording to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The agency recommends first washing hands with warm or cold water and then lathering soap for 20 seconds to get it on the backs of hands, between fingers and under finger nails before rinsing off.

If you're not near a sink, hand sanitizer will do. But keep in mind that it doesn't kill all germs, the CDC says. Read the label and make sure you're using one that has at least 60% alcohol, the health agency says. After applying it, rub it all over your hands until they're dry. Another tip: don't touch your face, since health officials say viruses could enter your body from your eyes, mouth or nose.

Hospitals are more concerned about a shortage of face masks, which people have also been snatching up despite pleas from health officials. Patient and treatment rooms in hospitals always have a sink and soap to wash hands, says Nancy Foster, the American Hospital Associa-

tion's head of quality and patient safety. But there are no good alternatives to masks for nurses and doctors.

Malls and sports arenas are adding more hand sanitizer stations. And some workplaces have said they are stocking up, too.

Purell, the best-selling hand sanitizer, is pumping up production. Walmart and other stores say they are talking to suppliers to stock up bare shelves, but didn't say how long that could take.

Purell says it has seen higher demand from health care facilities in addition to stores. It is adding more shifts and having employees work overtime at the two Ohio facilities where most Purell is made, says Samantha Williams, a spokeswoman for its parent company Gojo Industries.

Bath & Body Works, which sells hand sanitizers with scents like "vanilla rose" and "pineapple colada," says its been able to keep bottles in stock at its 1,700 stores. An executive for Bath & Body

Works owner L Brands said last week that hand sanitizers made up 5% of its total business and that it's growing "at a very high rate."

Walmart has seen higher demand for cleaning supplies and other items, similar to when shoppers start preparing for a hurricane. The world's largest retailer says it is working with suppliers to stock up again on those items, including hand sanitizer.

At a Costco in Los Angeles Tuesday, hand sanitizer was gone and shoppers clogged the back of the cavernous store where workers were wheeling out pallet after pallet of bottled water. "Don't believe the hype," one worker shouted.

On Amazon, most hand sanitizers were gone. Ones that remained were seriously overpriced, even though the company has said it is policing its site for price gougers. Two 8-ounce bottles of Purell, for example, were being offered for \$119 by a third-party seller; such vendors can list their items for sale on Amazon.com directly.

Payless SuperFresh & Truckload Store



YOU CAN SHOP, EARN & SAVE!

SIGN UP TODAY IT'S FREE!
ASK US HOW



FROZEN SALE 20% OFF On all frozen items from March 5th to 10th, 2020

*Except CAB items



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MAJOR CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED

Nation

Death toll from Tennessee tornadoes climbs to at least 24

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—Rescuers searched through shattered Tennessee neighborhoods for bodies Tuesday, less than a day after tornadoes ripped across Nashville and other parts of the state as families slept. At least 24 people were killed, some in their beds, authorities said.

The twisters that struck in the hours after midnight shredded more than 140 buildings and buried people in piles of rubble and wrecked basements. The storms moved so quickly that many people in their path could not flee to safer areas.

"It hit so fast, a lot of folks didn't have time to take shelter," Putnam County Mayor Randy Porter said. "Many of these folks were sleeping."

The governor declared an emergency and sent the National Guard to help with search-and-rescue efforts. State emergency officials, who initially reported at least 25 dead, revised the toll to 24 fatalities on Tuesday evening after determining one death counted earlier was not storm-related.

An unspecified number of people were missing.

Early findings by National Weather Service survey teams indicated that the damage in Nashville and Wilson County to the east was inflicted by a tornado of at least EF-3 intensity, the agency said.

One twister wrecked homes and businesses across a 10-



A road separates properties filled with debris Tuesday, March 3, 2020, near Lebanon, Tenn. AP

mile (16 kilometer) stretch of Nashville that included parts of downtown. It smashed more than three dozen buildings, including destroying the tower and stained glass of a historic church. Another tornado damaged more than 100 structures along a 2-mile (3.2-kilometer) path of destruction in Putnam County, wiping some homes from their foundations and depositing the wreckage far away.

Daybreak revealed landscapes littered with blown-

down walls and roofs, snapped power lines and huge broken trees, making many city streets and rural roads impassable. More than a dozen polling stations were also damaged, forcing Super Tuesday voters to wait in long lines at alternative sites.

In Putnam County, 80 miles (some 130 kilometers) east of Nashville, houses and businesses were completely flattened. In one neighborhood, volunteers found five bodies. Neighbors and sheriff's offi-

cers were still looking for two more. Later, authorities imposed an 8 p.m.-8 a.m. curfew in the county and reported one looting arrest.

Nashville residents walked around on streets and sidewalks littered with debris, in neighborhoods where missing walls and roofs left living rooms and kitchens exposed. Mangled power lines and broken trees came to rest on cars, streets and piles of rubble.

"We are resilient and we're going to rebuild," Nashville

Mayor John Cooper said.

During Gov. Bill Lee's tour of Putnam County, homeowners dug through debris, trying to salvage any items



Source: AP
Graphic: Staff, TNS

not destroyed. One young woman held up a clean green blouse while standing on a second floor of a home that had no roof.

President Donald Trump spoke with the governor by phone and pledged federal assistance, the White House said. Trump also announced plans to visit the disaster area on Friday.

Tensions rise as US death toll from coronavirus reaches 9

SEATTLE (AP)—Tensions over how to contain the coronavirus escalated Tuesday in the United States as the death toll climbed to nine and lawmakers expressed doubts about the government's ability to ramp up testing fast enough to deal with the crisis.

All of the deaths have occurred in Washington state, and most were residents of a nursing home in suburban Seattle. The number of infections in the U.S. overall climbed past 100, scattered across at least 15 states, with 27 cases in Washington alone.

"What is happening now in the United States may be the beginning of what is happening abroad," said Dr. Nancy Messonnier of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, noting that in China, where the outbreak began more than two months ago, older and sicker people are about twice as likely to become seriously ill as those who are younger and healthier. Most cases have been mild.

The nursing home outbreak apparently seeded the first case in North Carolina, authorities said. A Wake County resident who had visited the Washington state nursing home tested positive

but is in isolation at home and is doing well, according to the North Carolina governor's office.

In suburban Seattle, 27 firefighters and paramedics who responded to calls at the nursing home were tested for the virus Tuesday using a drive-thru system set up in a hospital parking area.

Thirty-year-old firefighter Kevin Grimstad took care of two patients Jan. 29 at Life Care Center in Kirkland. He is among 10 from the Kirkland Fire Department who developed symptoms after calls to the nursing facility.

Grimstad, his wife and 6-month-old son have taken turns recovering from fevers, coughs and congestion. They're all feeling better, but wish they knew more about the virus.

"It's crazy. A couple of weeks ago, it seemed like a foreign thing and now we're getting tested," Grimstad said. "If I was exposed a month ago, the problem is more widespread than we know."

In the nation's capital, officials moved on a number of fronts.

A bipartisan \$7.5 billion emergency bill to fund the government's response to the outbreak worked its way through Congress.

Biden wins 8 Super Tuesday states; Sanders takes California

WASHINGTON (AP)—A resurgent Joe Biden scored sweeping victories across the country with the backing of a diverse coalition and progressive rival Bernie Sanders seized Super Tuesday's biggest prize with a win in California as the Democratic Party's once-crowded presidential field suddenly transformed into a two-man contest.

The two Democrats, lifelong politicians with starkly different visions for America's future, were battling for delegates as 14 states and one U.S. territory held a series of high-stakes elections that marked the most significant day of voting in the party's 2020 presidential nomination fight. The winner will take on President Donald Trump in the November general election.

The other two high-profile candidates still in the shrinking Democratic field, New York billionaire Mike Bloomberg and Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, were teetering on the edge of viability.

Warren finished in an embarrassing third place in her home state, and Bloomberg planned to reassess his candidacy on Wednesday after spending more than a half billion dollars to score a single victory — in American Samoa.

The new contours of a nomination fight pitting Biden against Sanders, each leading coalitions of disparate demographics and political beliefs, were crystallizing by day's end as the former vice president and the three-term senator spoke to each other from dueling victory speeches separated by 2,500 miles (4,000 kilometers) Tuesday night.

"People are talking about a revolution. We started a movement," Biden charged in Los Angeles, knocking one of Sanders' signature lines.

And without citing his surging rival by name, Sanders swiped at Biden from Burlington, Vermont.

"You cannot beat Trump with the same-old, same-old kind of politics," Sanders de-

clared, ticking down a list of past policy differences with Biden on Social Security, trade and military force. "This will become a contrast in ideas."

The balance of Super Tuesday's battlefield — with Biden winning at least eight states and Sanders four — raised questions about whether the Democratic primary contest would stretch all the way to the July convention or be decided much sooner.

Biden's strong finish punctuated a dramatic turnaround in the span of just three days when he leveraged a blow-out victory in South Carolina to score sweeping victories on Tuesday that transcended geography, class and race. And lest there be any doubt, he cemented his status as the standard-bearer for the Democrats' establishment wing.

The former vice president showed strength in the Northeast with a win in Massachusetts, won Minnesota in the upper Midwest and finished on top across the South in Vir-

ginia, Alabama, North Carolina, Tennessee and Arkansas — in addition to Oklahoma.

Sanders opened the night as the undisputed Democratic front-runner and was in a position to claim an insurmountable delegate lead. And while he scored the night's biggest delegate-prize in California, he scored just three other decisive victories, winning his home state of Vermont, along with Utah and Colorado.

Still, Sanders proved he could deliver in perhaps the greatest test of his decades-long political career. His success was built on a base of energized liberals, young people and Latinos. And his conclusive win in California marks a huge reversal in a state he lost four years ago.

Biden racked up his victories despite being dramatically outspent and out-staffed. Moderate rival Bloomberg, for example, poured more than \$19 million into television advertising in Virginia, while Biden spent less than \$200,000.

Asia

North Korean swagger may conceal brewing virus disaster

TOKYO (AP)—In these days of infection and fear, a recent propaganda photo sums up the image North Korea wants to show the world, as well as its people: Soldiers with black surgical masks surround leader Kim Jong Un, ensconced in a leather overcoat and without a mask as he oversees a defiant military drill.

As a new and frightening virus closes in around it, North Korea presents itself as a fortress, tightening its borders as cadres of health officials stage a monumental disinfection and monitoring program.

That image of world-defying impregnability, however, may belie a brewing disaster.

North Korea, which has what experts call a horrendous medical infrastructure in the best of times, shares a porous, nearly 1,450-kilometer (900-mile) border with China, where the disease originated and has since rapidly spread around the world. The North's government has also long considered public reports on infectious disease—or, for that matter, anything that could hurt the ruling elite—matters of state secrecy.

This has raised fears that North Korea, which claims zero infections, may be vastly unprepared for a virus that is testing much more developed countries across the globe—and even that infections could already be exploding within its borders.

“Unfortunately, the international community has no idea if the coronavirus is spreading inside North Korea,” said a recent report by Jessica Lee, an



In this Feb. 26, 2020, file photo, Members from an emergency anti-epidemic headquarters in Mangyongdae District, disinfect a tramcar of Songsan Tram Station to prevent new coronavirus infection in Pyongyang, North Korea. AP

East Asia expert at the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft, a think tank in Washington. “The fact that we know nothing about the level of infection or deaths within North Korea is extremely problematic and, left unchanged, could have serious public health implications.”

North Korean media, meanwhile, are filled with self-described examples of ultra-vigilance—as well as a sense of urgency.

Calling its anti-virus campaign a matter of “national existence,” the North has banned foreign tourists, delayed the

school year, quarantined hundreds of foreigners and thousands of locals who’ve traveled abroad, shut down nearly all cross-border traffic with China, intensified screening at entry points, and mobilized tens of thousands of health workers to monitor residents and isolate those with symptoms.

A parade of media photographs show North Korean doctors, scientists and health workers in masks, paper hats and protective clothing, discussing matters of science, or disinfecting public transportation, or planning ways to further protect citizens.

“No special cases must be allowed within the state anti-epidemic system,” Kim, emerging recently from a prolonged period out of the public spotlight to oversee a politburo meeting on the virus, said, according to state media. Officials must “seal off all the channels and space through which the infectious disease may find its way.”

On Monday, Kim’s military fired unidentified projectiles into the sea, weapons tests apparently aimed, in part, at showing that all’s well amid outside worries about an outbreak in the North.

Despite the bravado, there are rising doubts that North Korea has dodged the virus.

China’s U.N. ambassador, Zhang Jun, told reporters in New York that North Korea is suffering “negatively” from coronavirus, without providing details.

Some North Korea monitoring groups, which claim to have a network of sources inside the nation, recently said that there are virus patients and deaths in North Korea, a claim the South Korean government couldn’t confirm.

“I’m 100% sure that North Korea already has infected

patients,” said Nam Sung-wook, a North Korea expert at South Korea’s Korea University who served as president of the Institute for National Security Strategy, a think tank affiliated with South Korea’s main spy agency.

If North Korea had an outbreak similar to what’s happening in South Korea, the world’s hardest-hit country aside from China, it would cause serious turmoil because of a chronic lack of medical supplies and medicine, Nam said.

“North Korea would be helpless,” he said.

Some analysts believe that North Korea’s strong moves to shut down border areas with China, its only major ally and aid benefactor, signal that the virus has already spread into the nation from China, which has had more than 80,000 cases.

There is usually heavy border traffic between the two countries, and tens of thousands of North Koreans were believed to be working in China before a U.N. order for Beijing to send them back home expired in December. It’s unknown how many of them have returned home.

There have been growing outside calls for North Korea to open up about what’s going on inside its borders.

The U.N. Special Rapporteur on human rights in North Korea, Tomás Ojea Quintana, urged North Korea to “allow full and unimpeded access to medical experts and humanitarian actors, and relax restrictions on access to information. Further isolation of the country is not the answer.”

ASIA BRIEFS

Malaysia’s new PM delays Parliament, and no-confidence vote

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP)—Malaysia’s new leader has postponed the next session of Parliament by more than two months, effectively delaying plans by Mahathir Mohamad’s former ruling alliance to seek a no-confidence vote against him. Lower house speaker Mohamad Ariff Mohamad Yusof said in a statement Wednesday that lawmakers will reconvene on May 18 instead of March 9 as originally scheduled. He said the decision was based on Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin’s order, but no reason was given for the postponement. Muhyiddin, 72, was sworn in Sunday as Malaysia’s eighth prime minister after his surprise weekend appointment by the king capped a week of political turmoil.

Muhyiddin led his Bersatu party out of the governing Alliance of Hope, depriving it of a majority and causing its collapse less than two years after its historic victory in 2018 ousted a corruption-tainted coalition that had ruled for 61 years. Bersatu joined hands with the same coalition that it ousted, along with several smaller parties, to form a Malay-majority government. Mahathir, 94, resigned to protest Bersatu’s plan to work with the former government.

Japan opens part of last town off-limits since nuclear leaks

TOKYO (AP)—Japan’s government on Wednesday opened part of the last town that had been off-limits due to radiation since the Fukushima nuclear disaster nine years ago, in a symbolic move to show the region’s

recovery ahead of the Tokyo Olympics. The entire population of 7,000 was forced to evacuate Futaba after three reactors melted down due to damage at the town’s nuclear plant caused by a magnitude 9.0 quake and tsunami March 11, 2011. The partial lifting of the entry ban comes weeks before the Olympic torch starts from another town in Fukushima. The torch could also arrive in Futaba, about 4 kilometers (2.4 miles) from the wrecked nuclear plant. Unrestricted access, however, is only being allowed to a 2.4 square-kilometer (less than 1 square-mile) area near the main Futaba train station, which will reopen later this month to reconnect it with the rest of the region for the first time since the accident. The vast majority of Futaba is restricted to those who get permission for a day visit.

‘PH news conference helped end hostage crisis’

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine officials said Tuesday they allowed an armed man who took dozens of people hostage in a mall to hold a news conference to encourage him to free his captives and give police a chance to grab him as he talked with a throng of journalists.

Reporters said they were unaware that the hostage taker, a recently dismissed security guard at the mall who was identified by police as Alchie Paray, had a pistol with him when he faced the media as the crisis came to an end Monday night. But Manila’s police chief, Maj. Gen. Debold Sinas, said snipers were under orders to shoot Paray in the head if he drew his gun or made any hostile moves while speaking to journalists.

The 10-hour hostage crisis ended peacefully when Paray walked out of the V-Mall in

Manila’s upscale Greenhills district and freed his captives. Afterward, he faced TV cameras and journalists for several minutes and angrily voiced his grievances against his former superiors before police swarmed in and subdued him.

Criminal complaints will be filed against Paray, including illegal detention and attempted murder for shooting and wounding a mall security officer at the start of the crisis, officials said. The victim was recovering in a hospital.

During a news conference Tuesday, journalists said they were unaware that Paray still had a pistol concealed on his waist when police allowed him to talk to the media the night before. Sinas suggested it was deliberate.

“That’s why your questioning was spontaneous,” he said. “If I had told you, nobody would have stayed in front.

Then it defeats the purpose.”

Sinas said police had no intention of putting any journalists at risk during the crisis and even tried to push them away from the scene but some insisted on getting close. Still, he apologized to reporters who he said may have felt “violated.”

Some of the gunman’s demands, including being allowed to speak before the media after releasing his hostages, were granted because authorities believed it would calm him down and bring the crisis to a peaceful end, said Mayor Francis Zamora of San Juan city, the section of the Philippine capital where the crisis occurred.

“It was all part of the strategy and in the end, it worked,” Zamora said. “Nobody died and all the hostages were freed.”

“He wanted his grievances heard. It was very simple so we gave it to him,” Zamora added.

World

Virus crisis ebbs in China, spreads fear across the West

PARIS (AP)—The coronavirus epidemic shifted increasingly westward toward the Middle East, Europe and the United States on Tuesday, with governments taking emergency steps to ease shortages of masks and other supplies for front-line doctors and nurses.

“We are concerned that countries’ abilities to respond are being compromised by the severe and increasing disruption to the global supply of personal protective equip-

ment, caused by rising demand, hoarding and misuse,” said World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. “We can’t stop COVID-19 without protecting our health workers.”

Deaths in Italy surged to 79, making it the deadliest reported outbreak outside China. Twenty-three members of Iran’s Parliament and the head of the country’s emergency services were reported infected. South Korea expand-

ed drive-thru testing and confirmed hundreds of new cases. And in Spain’s Basque region, at least five doctors and nurses were infected and nearly 100 health care workers were being held in isolation.

The mushrooming outbreaks contrasted with optimism in China, where thousands of recovered patients were going home and the number of new infections has been dropping.

Worldwide, more than 93,000 people have been in-

fectured and over 3,100 have died, the vast majority of them in China. The number of countries hit by the virus exceeded 70, with Ukraine and Morocco reporting their first cases.

Virus clusters in the United States led schools and subways to sanitize and spread fears among nursing home residents, who are especially vulnerable. The number of the infections in the U.S. topped 100 and the death toll climbed to nine. All of the deaths were

in Washington state, and most of them were residents of a Seattle-area nursing home.

The U.S. Federal Reserve announced the biggest interest-rate cut in over a decade to try to counter the expected damage to the economy, and stocks rose briefly on Wall Street in reaction before slumping again. Fed Chairman Jerome Powell said the virus “will surely weigh on economic activity both here and abroad for some time.”

Other Group of Seven countries appeared reluctant to follow suit with their own cuts, probably because many of their interest rates are already near or below zero.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration gave health care workers the OK to use an industrial type of respirator mask often used to protect construction workers from dust and debris.

Iran’s supreme leader or-

dered the military to assist health officials in fighting the virus, which authorities said has killed 77 people. Among the dead are a confidant of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran’s former ambassador to the Vatican and a recently elected member of Parliament.

Iran’s judiciary chief, Ebrahim Raisi, said some people are stockpiling medical supplies for profit and urged prosecutors to show no mercy. “Hoarding sanitizing items is playing with people’s lives, and it is not ignorable,” he said.

France’s president announced the government will take control of current and future stocks of face masks to ensure they could go to health workers and coronavirus patients, and the finance minister warned that binge-shopping for household essentials could trigger shortages. The country reported a total of more than 200 cases and four deaths.



An airline agent wears a protective mask while printing out boarding passes at an airport check-in at the Arturo Merino Benítez International Airport, in Santiago, Chile, Tuesday, March 3, 2020.

Turkey downs Syrian fighter jet in northwest Idlib

ANKARA, Turkey (AP)—Turkey shot down a Syrian fighter jet in Syria’s Idlib province Tuesday, marking the third such incident in as many days, as steady clashes between the two national armies continued over a Russia-backed Syrian government offensive near the Turkish border.

State-run Syrian media said troops shot down a Turkish drone, keeping up a clash in the skies over the northwestern province that has gone on for days and signaled a new stage in the 9-year-old war.

Ahead of a much-anticipated summit later this week between the presidents of Turkey and Russia, the two main power brokers in Syria, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov again laid the blame for the escalation squarely on Turkey.

Russian officials have said

they hold Turkey responsible for the collapse of a cease-fire agreement reached in Sochi, Russia in 2018, saying Ankara had not held up its end to rein in militants who continued attacking Syrian and Russian targets.

“The solution to the problem lies in implementing the (Sochi) agreements. They are not being implemented,” Lavrov said after meeting with his Finnish counterpart Pekka Haavisto in Helsinki on Tuesday. He expressed hope that the scheduled Thursday meeting between Russian and Turkish presidents in Moscow will change the situation.

Keeping up the pressure on the battlefield, Turkey’s military downed a warplane belonging to Syrian government forces—for the third time since Sunday. The Syrian military said Turkish forces target-

ed a warplane with a missile as it was carrying out operations against “terrorist groups” in the rebel-held Idlib region, causing it to crash northwest of the town of Maaret al-Numan. The fate of the crew was not clear.

Turkey has sent thousands of troops into Idlib to support the opposition fighters holed up there, but hasn’t been able to roll back the government’s advance.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has said he hopes to broker a cease-fire in Syria later this week when he meets with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow.

But the Russian-backed offensive into the country’s last rebel-held area has led to increasingly frequent clashes between the Syrian and Turkish armies that have killed dozens on both sides. It has also threatened a collapse

in Turkish cooperation with Moscow, a key backer of Syrian President Bashar Assad.

Turkey’s Defense Ministry said one Turkish soldier was killed and nine others were wounded in an attack Tuesday, prompting Turkey’s military to strike at 82 Syrian government targets in retaliation. Another soldier was killed on Monday, the ministry said. That raised to 56 the Turkish losses this month in clashes with Russian-backed Syrian forces. The death toll includes 33 Turkish soldiers killed Thursday in a single airstrike.

The government’s offensive has also sparked one of the Syrian war’s worst humanitarian crises. Almost a million Syrian civilians have fled north toward the sealed Turkish border, overwhelming camps already crowded above capacity.

WORLD BRIEFS

Torrential rains kill 16 on Brazil coast, and dozens missing

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP)—A storm that pummeled Brazil’s southeastern coast early Tuesday caused landslides and killed at least 16 people. Dozens more were missing. The deaths occurred in the cities of Guarujá, Santos and São Vicente of São Paulo state, with the former hardest hit, according to a statement from its civil defense office. The office estimates 200 people have been displaced in Guarujá. Brazil’s southeast region has been hit by heavy rains this year, causing recurrent floods and landslides. The worst instance came in January, when dozens perished in landslides in the interior state of Minas Gerais. Some parts of Rio de Janeiro were flooded on Sunday and Monday, and several people died, according to local firefighters. Further, state authorities said more than 5,000 people had been forced from their homes.

Cyprus sees surge in migrants after Turkey opens border

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP)—Cyprus is seeing a surge of migrants after Turkey’s president made good on a threat to stop intercepting people trying to reach Europe. Cyprus, a member of the European Union, is a mere 51 miles (83 kilometers) away from Turkey at its nearest point. Interior Minister Ni-

cos Nouris said 223 migrants reached the island’s south in the last 72 hours, 153 of them arriving Tuesday. Police said another boat ferrying 101 Syrian migrants reached Cypriot shores later Tuesday after setting sail from Mersin, Turkey. “Certainly, this concerns us, and we want to see what measures we can take in order to guard against any change in the country’s demographic character but without discounting human suffering,” Cypriot President Nicos Anastasiades said.

US citizen arrested in murder of 2 women in Nicaragua

MANAGUA, Nicaragua (AP)—Nicaraguan police arrested a U.S. citizen in the killing of two women in the tourist destination of Granada, the government said Tuesday. The official outlet El 19 Digital said Larry Robert McCartney was arrested Monday. It cited statements from Granada police Commissioner Félix Villarreal saying 68-year-old McCartney was accused of shooting his girlfriend and one of her friends in Granada after a disagreement. Villarreal said the three had been drinking in a bar before McCartney drove them off in a car. He later forced them out of the car, shot them and then left their bodies. Police found a .38 caliber revolver on McCartney. McCartney was believed to be a resident of Granada.

Focus

China's schools, forced online by virus, run into censors

By YANAN WANG
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Less than 30 minutes into a lecture on bioinformatics, Chu Xinjian's class was abruptly cut short.

It was the first day of an unusual semester. Across China, schools are shut indefinitely in a bid to contain a new virus that has killed some 3,000 people. Chu's class was one of tens of thousands of courses, from grade school to university, that have been forced online.

Chu's professor was painstakingly sending voice recordings to the class group chat when, without warning, the system disbanded the group for violating China's Internet regulations—a pervasive, almost mundane part of life under Communist Party rule.

The students were puzzled. Was it because of something about the subject matter? Bioinformatics is the science of collecting and analyzing complex biological data. "I'm not sure exactly what phrases triggered it," said Chu, who recounted the incident. "I guess we touched on some sensitive topic."

Major social media platforms including Facebook, YouTube and Twitter are blocked in China, while homegrown ones such as Weibo and WeChat are heavily monitored and scrubbed for offensive content by the state Cyberspace Administration and police.

Now, the sudden arrival of public education onto platforms that are generally the domain of celebrity livestreamers has thrown the controls into stark relief. Classrooms are confronting the ubiquity and often arbitrary nature of the ruling Communist Party's online censorship.

Biology courses have been blocked for "pornographic content." History and politics classes are among the most vulnerable; subjects such as the Cultural Revolution and the Great Leap Forward are regularly censored in classes and online discussions.

Daily life in the world's most populous nation has undergone a radical transformation in the past six weeks. Once-bustling streets are empty, fast-food restaurants offer only takeout service and group activities have been replaced with remote everything—remote work, remote fitness class, remote schooling.

"Classes have stopped but learning will not," the Education Ministry said in a February notice. It has established 24,000 free online courses on 22 web platforms, covering both undergraduate and vocational disciplines.

Yet many lesson plans have been stymied by the country's strict online regulators.

Louis Wang, a middle school history teacher in northeast China, said his workload has ballooned because of an arduous approval process for online classes.

While teachers have some leeway to facilitate spontaneous discussion in a classroom setting, online classes can be recorded, with the potential for clips to be taken out of context and circulated online.

"Every word that is spoken in a video recording must be pre-approved," Wang said.

For him, that means writing word-for-word his entire lecture—about 5,000 Chinese characters—for review by school administrators.

Even seemingly non-controversial statements can run afoul of the censors.

Wang said one of his colleagues, a politics teacher, was trying to upload a document for his students with "socialism with Chinese characteristics" in its title. The phrase was championed by former leader Deng Xiaoping and is still frequently used by the government today.

For reasons unexplained, the cloud platform blocked the document. It could be uploaded only after the overtly political phrase was removed.

Teachers are using workarounds to skirt a variety of digital obstacles. On the messaging app WeChat, documents can be rejected for transmission to a group chat if a file fails a "safety inspection."

The same documents, however, can often be shared in direct messages, so some teachers have resorted to sending files to parents and students one-by-one.

"Teachers having their online classes blocked, that's funny, because it's too absurd," Wang Yuechi, a well-known Chinese comedian wrote on his verified account on Weibo, an app similar to Twitter.

"This is not normal—it's because there's no freedom of speech," he wrote. "Just like how it's not normal that this post will also be deleted. I hope everyone can be aware of this. The absence of freedom of speech will impact our education, our lives. This has already happened. It's not so funny now, is it?"

As Wang predicted, his post can no longer be viewed on Weibo.

Not every online class mishap involves censorship. Sometimes technical difficulties are the culprit.

Cheng Yufan, a university student in the southern province of Jiangsu, inadvertently became the host of a lecture on the first day of online classes last month.

When class was set to start, her philosophy professor was nowhere to be found, Cheng said. The professor was logged onto a different platform; meanwhile, the other one had designated Cheng as group administrator.

Their professor fared no better on the second platform. Internet connection issues resulted in Cheng and her classmates tuning into two hours of silence.

Afterwards, the unwitting professor wrote in their class group chat, "See you next time!"

In this Feb. 25, 2020, photo, a resident wearing a mask walks outside a closed school with a mural depicting keywords including at right "Rule of law" in Beijing. Chinese schools turning to online learning during a virus outbreak are running into the country's ubiquitous and often arbitrary internet censorship.

Environment

Since an enormous coal power plant went up five years ago near a once-empty beach, villagers here blame its emissions for the pains in their chests, the foul smell in their groundwater and the fine black dust that smears their rice crop.

Now the Vietnamese government is planning a second coal-fired plant next door, but officials have told residents little about the project, which is financed by investors from China, Japan and Singapore—and due to run on equipment from one of America's most familiar corporate names: General Electric.

In the U.S., GE is increasingly known for wind turbines and other renewable energy technology, among many other products. But the 1,200-megawatt plant due to be built here on Vietnam's northern coast is one of 19 coal power projects the company is working on in 17 foreign countries, many with far weaker environmental standards than the United States.

The projects have prompted allegations that GE, mired in financial trouble, is attempting to dump outdated and highly polluting technology on developing countries.

They also put GE at odds with a growing number of international banks and manufacturers that are no longer investing in new coal infrastructure because of the environmental damage caused by the dirtiest fossil fuel and the increasing affordability of solar and wind energy.

"There's no way GE could get away with this sort of aggressive expansion of coal in the U.S.," said Julien Vincent, executive director of Market Forces, a climate advocacy group based in Australia.

Company officials say the countries where they sell technology want coal—still the world's No. 1 power source—to boost economic development. Vietnam's communist government, which approves every energy project, is planning to boost its growing manufacturing sector by adding more than 33.5 gigawatts of electricity over the next decade, half of it from coal.

GE says that its coal plants are more environmentally friendly than the global average, and that it has upgraded the design of several projects, including the northern Vietnamese plant dubbed Vung Ang 2, to reduce carbon emissions.

"We support customers and governments who are working to deliver access to affordable and reliable electricity," GE said in a statement to The Times. "GE provides the best available technology, no matter which fuel is chosen."



The village of Ky Loi, in northeastern Vietnam, with the smokestack of the Vung Ang 1 power plant seen in the distance.

Environmental groups argue that coal plants pollute poor communities, and that any expansion of fossil fuel-based power jeopardizes efforts under the Paris climate agreement to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) above preindustrial levels by 2030, seen as essential to staving off the worst effects of climate change.

Market Forces launched a campaign Monday called "GE Get Out of Coal" and released an open letter signed by 65 activist groups from the 17 countries, calling on the company to cease supporting coal plants.

Many of GE's projects are already delayed because of legal troubles, public opposition and difficulties obtaining financing—a reflection of the diminishing global market for coal power. In January, Bloomberg News reported that GE was looking to sell its steam power unit, which supplies coal plants, part of its larger power business, which had revenues that fell by 22% in 2018.

Publicly, the company emphasizes renewables: It has agreements to develop at least 1,800 megawatts of wind power in Vietnam, with some equipment manufactured at its factory in the coastal city of Hai Phong. Its coal projects are bigger but less well known.

"I was surprised to hear about Vung Ang 2 because in Vietnam we think of GE as a green company," said Nguy Thi Khanh, founder of the Green Innovation and Development Center, one of Vietnam's leading environmental groups. "I wondered why GE was involved in this."

According to the Global Coal Plant Tracker, GE has agreed to supply equipment—including steam turbines and boilers—at 19 overseas coal

projects that account for 15 gigawatts of electricity. If GE were a country, it would have the seventh largest slate of upcoming coal plants in the world, according to Market Forces.

GE has endorsed the Paris climate agreement and says renewable energy is its future. But its thermal power business—built on installing and operating coal and gas plants—has long been the core of the company, once the most valuable in the world.

In 2015 GE made an ill advised bet on the future of fossil fuels, paying \$13 billion to acquire a French energy company, Alstom, and doubling its fleet of coal plant turbines. That investment collapsed as the market for renewables took off, erasing 74% of GE's value in three years.

The closure of coal plants in the U.S. and Europe has forced GE to look to emerging markets.

"What you're seeing is essentially a fire sale," said Melissa Brown, director of Asia energy finance studies at the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis. "This is a liquidation strategy that, at this stage of the game, reeks of desperation. They are literally trying to sell anything they can, wherever they can."

As a result, analysts say, GE has become entangled in controversial projects. In Kenya, a court last year halted a 1,000-megawatt power plant on Lamu island, adjacent to a UNESCO World Heritage Site, ruling that the Kenyan and Chinese developers had failed to conduct proper environmental assessments.

A Chinese-backed power plant at Tuzla in Bosnia-Herzegovina, due to use GE equipment, is moving ahead despite violations of European Union financing and pollution control stan-

dards, according to Bankwatch, which monitors investments by European public banks.

After a project in Poland was suspended last month because of difficulties obtaining financing, state-owned utilities opened talks with GE to convert the power station from coal to gas.

A separate GE project in southern Vietnam has been delayed after a Russian contractor, Power Machines, was hit with U.S. sanctions over Moscow's military interventions in Ukraine and Crimea.

There is no construction date set for Vung Ang 2, which has been in the planning stages for more than a decade. Two banks and a Hong Kong-based power company have withdrawn from the project in recent months, but the Vietnamese government says it expects the plant to begin operating in early 2024.

The \$2.2-billion project has raised controversy in part because of its location—across a bay from a steel mill where a 2016 chemical spill destroyed hundreds of acres of coral reefs and poisoned more than 100 tons of fish, their carcasses washing ashore across four provinces.

The spill—widely described as Vietnam's worst environmental disaster—and emissions from the coal plant have devastated the fish trade upon which the villagers surrounding Vung Ang have relied for generations. A dangerous human trafficking operation thrives here as many young men seek jobs in Europe; of the 39 Vietnamese migrants found dead in a truck outside London last fall, several hailed from this area.

According to documents published by a Japanese government bank linked to the project, developers informed nearby residents in writing that they would minimize pollution and fairly compensate anyone whose land was needed to build the plant. In October, local officials held a meeting where they encouraged residents to sign papers agreeing to sell farmland, even though the price hasn't been set.

In Ky Loi, a village of single-story concrete homes where red Vietnamese flags wave from bamboo poles, residents complained of chronic coughs and itchy skin. They all blamed the culprit they could see from their front doors: the red-and-white smokestack of the existing power plant.

No one had told them if they would be relocated for the second one.

"We don't want to live next to this pollution, but we don't know what's going to happen," said Le Ngoc Anh, a 65-year-old fisherman. "Poor people don't get a choice."

GE says it's going green. Overseas, it's still pushing coal

By SHASHANK BENGALI
LOS ANGELES TIMES



The 1,200-megawatt Vung Ang 1 power station, in northeastern Vietnam, has operated since 2014. GE is involved in an expansion that would double the station's capacity.

SHASHANK BENGALI/LOS ANGELES TIMES/TNS

SHASHANK BENGALI/LOS ANGELES TIMES/TNS

Life & Style

Irish architects Farrell, McNamara win Pritzker Prize

NEW YORK (AP)—Irish architects Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara have been awarded the 2020 Pritzker Architecture Prize for “consistent service to humanity as evidenced by a body of built work,” and for leading the way for women in a male-dominated profession.

The announcement was made Tuesday by Tom Pritzker, chairman of The Hyatt Foundation, which sponsors the award, considered the highest honor in architecture.

The jury citation noted that the pair, who co-founded their Dublin-based Grafton Architects in 1978, “have consistently and unhesitatingly pursued the highest quality of architecture for the specific location in which it was to be built, the functions it would house and especially for the people who would inhabit and use their buildings and spaces.”

It added: “They have an oeuvre that includes numerous educational buildings, housing and cultural and civic institutions. Pioneers in a field that has traditionally been and still is a male-dominated profession, they are also beacons to others as they forge their exemplary professional path.”

In a telephone interview from Dublin, Farrell and McNamara described to The Associated Press how they began their collaboration as early as 1969, when they met as architecture students. “We learned a lot from each other,” McNamara said. “We grew together in college.”

Even now, she said, after



This undated image provided by the Pritzker Prize shows the interior of a building at Bocconi University in Milan, designed by Irish architects Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara. AP

decades in the field, “What’s interesting is we always feel like we’re starting. With architecture, you always feel like you get younger as you get older. You’re continually being challenged and continually challenging yourself. You never sit back and say ‘OK, I’ve done that.’”

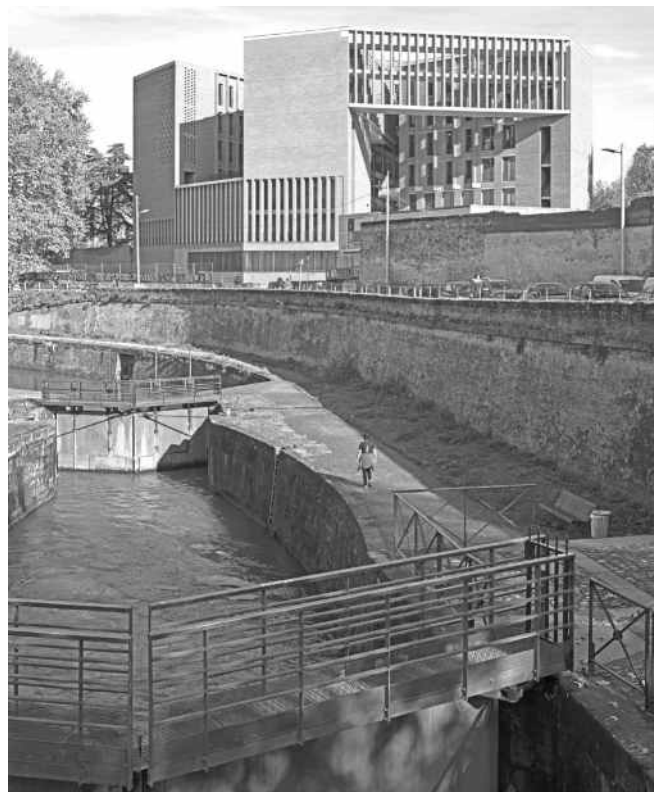
The architects have collaborated on many projects in their home country, but also have won commissions in locales like Peru, Italy and France.

Farrell said the two believe that “architecture is both a

business and an art.”

“In each project,” she said, “there is the capacity to find something that is an addition to what the client originally maybe dreamed of, something that’s added by the imaginative and creative skills of what the architecture profession can bring.”

“We say sometimes that we’re like scientists of space,” she added in the interview. When conceiving a project for a client, she said, “We try and understand your aspiration functionally but also in



This image released by the Pritzker Prize shows the exterior of the University of Toulouse in Toulouse, France. The building was designed by Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara, recipients of the 2020 Pritzker Architecture Prize. AP

In a manifesto written for the Venice Biennale in 2018, Farrell and McNamara wrote: “We are interested in going beyond the visual, emphasizing the role of architecture in the choreography of daily life. We see the earth as Client; this brings with it long-lasting responsibilities. Architecture is the play of light, sun, shade, moon, air, wind, gravity in ways that reveal the mysteries of the world.”

The Pritzker Architecture Prize was established in 1979 by the late entrepreneur Jay A. Pritzker and his wife, Cindy. The winner receives a \$100,000 grant and a bronze medallion. It is awarded not to a firm but to an individual architect; when more than one individual is selected, it’s because the jury deems their work to be inextricably linked.

terms of your dream, or your symbolism. We find a story in each project.”

The jury’s citation singled out projects like the Urban Institute of Ireland, a 2002 building that “employs what the architects call a ‘crafted skin’ to create a visually interesting building through changes in materials responding to openings, folds, needs for shade and other concerns,” while also creating an efficient, sustainable building.

It also cited university buildings in Peru and in Italy,

In this May 23, 2018 file photo, Biennale International Architecture exhibition curators Yvonne Farrell, left, and Shelley McNamara appear in Venice, Italy. AP

saying the architects “have achieved a human scale through the composition of spaces and volumes of different sizes. The dialogues they create between buildings and surroundings demonstrate a new appreciation of both their works and place.”



Best friend can’t suppress his crush on gay woman

DEAR ABBY: I am a gay woman. My male best friend has had a crush on me for more than a year. It is so intense that he is almost delusional. We have talked extensively about it. He knows where I stand and that it will never happen, and he says he accepts that. But he can’t stand the thought of me spending time with a woman, even if it’s just a friend. He wants all of my time and doesn’t want to share me, even with mutual friends.

Here’s the kicker: I had invited him to move back to my college town with me. We both thought that moving to a big city would open up more dating opportunities for us and help him get over me. It was an ordeal for him, but he put in a ton of work to be able to move. We planned to be housemates. This happened during a time when we thought he was feeling more resolved about our relationship.

We have been staying with my relative while we search for a house in the big city, so we are trapped in the same space, and he has nowhere else to go. Since moving in together, his feelings for me have resurged. I no longer want to be roommates because of his possessiveness. But it would devastate him if I left him alone here, especially since it was my idea to go, and I was meant to be his support system. I feel like I am trapped in his drama and cannot live my life without ruining his. Please help!

TRAPPED LESBIAN IN THE WEST

DEAR TRAPPED LESBIAN: Do not rent an apartment with him or buy a house! To do so would be an expensive mistake. You cannot fulfill his needs. If you allow this to continue, he will destroy every opportunity that comes your way because it will be a threat to his fantasy.

He needs to find other living arrangements NOW, and you and your relative should insist upon it. This is not going to have a fairy-tale ending, and you probably will not remain friends as you move along with your life. But move along is what you must do, for both your sakes.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: I went out of town on a business trip with two co-workers (both females), and the trip was a success. We got along great and accomplished all of the goals we set for ourselves during our stay.

During the few outings we had off company time, however, there were moments when we all wanted to link up and do everything together but our stomachs disagreed. If I wanted to go to breakfast at 8 a.m., someone would want to go at 11 a.m., or another co-worker wouldn’t want to go at all. Another example is, we would plan dinners (after touring the city all day) at a certain time, but it was so late my stomach would growl loudly.

I understand that flexibility is key, but my metabolism works overtime compared to theirs. How do I go about venturing off on my own for food without coming across as rude or looking

DEAR ABBY

By Abigail Van Buren
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



like I’m not a team player?

HUNGRY MAN IN NEW YORK

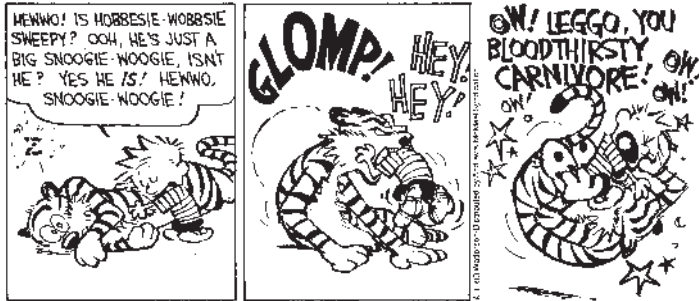
DEAR HUNGRY MAN: Explain it to your co-workers as you have to me. If your body is signaling that you must eat something NOW, you need to do it — if only enough to take the edge off your hunger. To do that isn’t rude. Taking care of yourself is important, and it doesn’t mean you aren’t a team player. Perhaps you should carry something with you to tide you over from meal to meal.

■■■

To receive a collection of Abby’s most memorable—and most frequently requested—poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes



By Bill Waterson

Garfield®



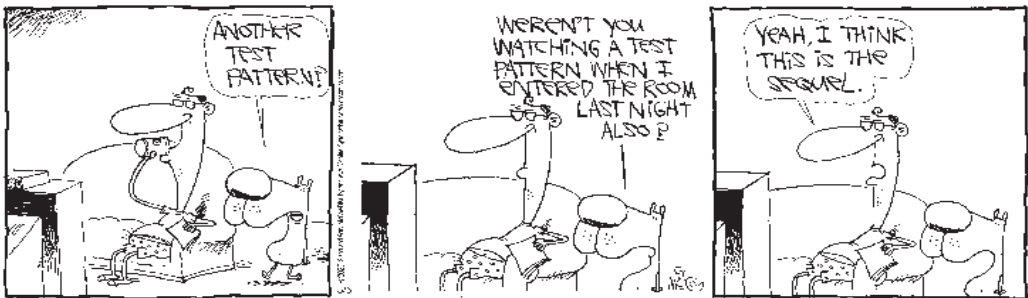
By Jim Davis

Adam@home



By Bryan Basset

The Duplex



By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

44 More silver-haired

4 Beer ingredient

8 Diminutive suffix

12 Water (Fr.)

13 Sharif of "Funny Girl"

14 Raised

15 Supposed

17 Audubon subject

18 Corpulent

19 Human body study

21 Sobbing sound

24 601, to Nero

25 Mess up

26 Potential syrup

28 Bygone Ford

32 Play parts

34 Ump

36 To be, in Toulon

37 Theater worker

39 Bill's partner

41 — glance

42 Fleur-de-

DOWN

1 Aug. follower

2 Greek cross

3 Present, as an idea

4 Guiding maxims

5 Parisian pal

6 Volcanic flow

7 Pollster's find

8 Receding sea

9 Small combo

10 School session

11 Vortex

16 Foot rub response

20 Expert

21 Boyfriend

22 Tolkien villains

23 Scull need

27 Chest muscle

29 Doesn't leave

30 Deco artist

31 Shake-spearean king

33 Fizzy water

35 Shore concealer

38 Carnival city

40 By word of mouth

43 Sari fabrics

45 Sashimi fish

46 Own (up)

47 Landed

48 New York's — Field

49 God, in Grenoble

53 Writer Harper

54 Colorful card game

55 Country singer McGraw

Solution time: 24 mins.

Yesterday's answer 3-5

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Kevin Connolly, 46; Matt Lucas, 46; Eva Mendes, 46; Dean Stockwell, 84.

Happy Birthday: Creativity mixed with discipline, desire and determination will lead to a journey you won't want to miss this year. You will attract followers and people who want to collaborate with you. Being open to what others have to offer will spark your imagination and encourage you to welcome changes and new beginnings. Romance is in the stars. Your numbers are 9, 15, 24, 28, 36, 40, 47.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Quiet time will help ease stress. Don't get involved in another person's drama. Channel your energy into something constructive that will bring results that you can be proud of or that will free up your time to relax and rejuvenate. **

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Think big, and make changes that position you for advancement. Traveling, taking meetings, making educational pursuits and pitching what you have to offer are all favored. A personal change will boost your confidence. Express your feelings. ****

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): A systematic approach to whatever you decide to take on will be necessary. Refuse to let anyone take over or threaten your position. Use your intelligence to make changes that are put together with precision. Counter any criticism you face with facts. ***

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Embrace your emotions, and share your feelings and intentions. Your passionate approach to what you want to see unfold will inspire others

to get involved. A change to the way you live or to a relationship that's important to you will be beneficial. ***

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Get the OK before you move forward, and leave nothing to chance. Precision, dedication and loyalty will play roles in how far you get. Money matters will end up causing emotional turmoil if you aren't fair or you overspend. ***

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Doors will open, and favors will be granted. Take an active role in your community or an organization that interests you. Love is in the stars, and expressing your feelings will result in favorable adjustments to the way you live. ****

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): A dispute with someone you care about will develop if you are too friendly with someone. Loyalty will count, so don't play with people's emotions. You might want to share a story, but don't gossip, or you'll look bad. **

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Take a chance to try something exciting. A creative suggestion will give you the push you need. A change of plans will provide you with an opportunity to learn or do something you've never done. Romance is on the rise. *****

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Think and do for yourself. If you let others meddle in your affairs, you'll regret the outcome. Keep your opinions and plans secret. Intelligence and common sense will help you bypass intruders offering lousy advice. Trust the facts, not hearsay. ***

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Aim to stabilize your position, finances and plans. Your ideas will be reliable, and if launched with precision and detail, you can make a sizable profit. Love is in the stars, and celebrating with someone special is encouraged. ***

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Focus on what's doable, and forget about what you cannot alter. Channel your energy into improving your surroundings or making your space more convenient or affordable. A realistic approach to money, lifestyle and work will ease stress and promote discipline. ***

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): No matter what you pursue today, put a smile on your face, have fun and enjoy the ride. Curiosity will be the vehicle that helps you surpass your expectations. Embrace change in order to set trends. A romantic gesture will enhance your life. *****

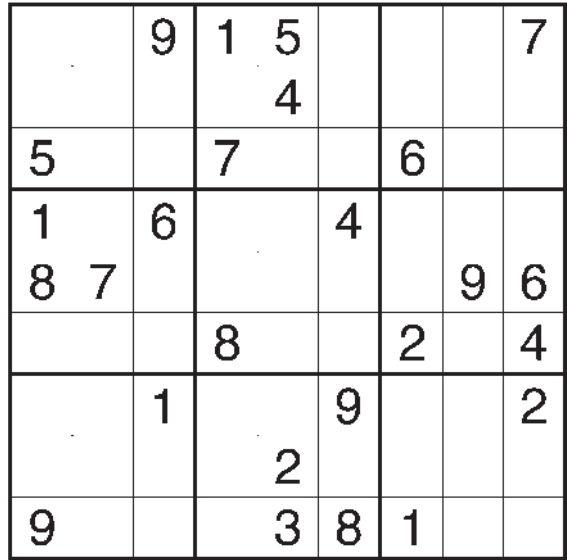
Birthday Baby: You are persistent, kind and charming. You are helpful and resourceful.

Visit EugeniaLast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU

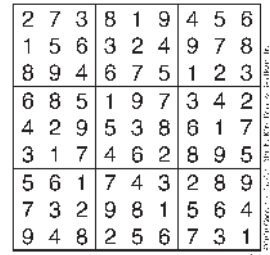
Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green



Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer



Difficulty Level ★★★ 3/05
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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID CUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

CONTEST WINNERS Solution: 8 letters

G T P I R T K T E R E B M U N
I N R V A C A T I O N S Y E B
V E I B U L O B L C T E S A A
E L Z L M V B A O N K P K A S
A A E O L O D N I C O E M D K
W T N G N E C O O R L E T O E
A E O I M E P H T F N O T N T
Y L P G R L I S F I L S G A B
H C U T A B O A C L O W E T A
P I O Y H C R U A P I E G E L
O H C O C E P B P N M B A D L
R E A E K S M G T A L S S R A
T V R P H O N E I L I I S A O
M O D N A R E L O F F T E W G
A N S W E R P E N S T E M A N

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Answer, Award, Bags, Bake, Ballot, Basketball, Blog, Caption, Cards, Cinema, Concert, Cook, Coupon, Cups, Donate, Email, Film, Gift, Giveaway, Goal, Hockey, Luck, Medal, Message, Money, Name, Number, Pens, Phone, Play, Points, Post, Prize, Raffle, Random, Ribbon, Soccer, Spelling, Sports, Talent, Theme, Ticket, Trip, Trophy, Vacation, Vehicle, Vote, Website, Win
Yesterday's Answer: Arendelle
The NEW Treasury 39 can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

Nets rally to stun Celtics in OT



BOSTON (AP)—Caris LeVert scored 37 of his career-high 51 points in the fourth quarter and overtime to help the Brooklyn Nets erase a 21-point, second-half deficit and beat the Boston Celtics 129-120 on Tuesday night.

It was a stunning end to a four-game losing streak for Brooklyn, which is trying to hold onto the final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference. Boston has lost two straight.

LeVert had all of Brooklyn's 11 points in the extra period, finishing just three points shy of the Nets' season high for a player. He sent the game to extra frame, getting fouled on a 3-point attempt by Marcus Smart and connecting on all of his free throws with 0.2 seconds left.

Jaylen Brown led Boston with 22 points. Kemba Walker returned to action following a five-game absence with left knee soreness and had 21 points. Smart added 14 points and 10 rebounds before fouling out in overtime.

Lakers 120, 76ers 107

In Los Angeles, the Lakers looked like they were in trouble early on Tuesday night, in a game against an extremely depleted opponent too.

The Lakers found themselves in an early 13-point hole to the Philadelphia 76ers — who were missing Joel Embiid, Ben Simmons and Josh Richardson all due to injury — despite holding a homecourt advantage at the Staples Center with a healthy LeBron James and Anthony Davis out on the court.

Finally, though, the Lakers took off—and never looked back.

The Lakers used a huge 22-4 rally over the final 5:18 of the first half to surge ahead and grab a double-digit lead by halftime. They scored the first 10 points in the third quarter, too, to grab a 21-point lead in an insane swing.

Spurs 104, Hornets 103

In Charlotte, Dejounte Murray scored 21 points and San Antonio gave Tim Duncan his first victory as an acting head coach.

Spurs longtime coach Gregg Popovich missed the game while dealing with personal business, according to the team. Popovich is expected to return to the bench for Friday night's game against the Brooklyn Nets.

The team would not say if Popovich made the trip to Charlotte.

Terry Rozier had 20 points and P.J. Washington added 19 with five 3-pointers for the Hornets.



Brooklyn Nets guard Caris LeVert falls to the floor as he is fouled by Boston Celtics guard Carsten Edwards (4) during the first half of an NBA game Tuesday, March 3, 2020, in Boston.

in the second half to snap a three-game losing streak.

Norman Powell added 26 points while Chris Boucher gave the Raptors crucial production off the bench, finishing with 19 points and 15 rebounds.

The Suns have lost four straight games. They pulled within 114-113 with 2:22 remaining but Boucher responded with a 3-pointer and the Raptors pulled away. Devin Booker led Phoenix with 22 points.

Kings 133, Wizards 126

In Sacramento, De'Aaron Fox scored 31 points and the Kings held on after blowing a 28-point lead to beat the Washington Wizards.

Bogdan Bogdanovic finished with 21 points, Buddy Hield scored 17 and Cory Joseph added 14 as the Kings had seven players in double figures on a wild night when they won despite being held to 19 points in the third quarter.

Bradley Beal had 35 points for Washington. Rui Hachimura added 20 points and Davis Bertans scored 18 on six 3-pointers.

Timberwolves 139, Pelicans 134

In New Orleans, Malik Beasley scored 28 points, D'Angelo Russell scored 14 of his 23 points in the second half, and Minnesota beat the Pelicans.

Zion Williamson scored 25 points and Jrue Holiday had 27 points, 12 assists and 10 rebounds for New Orleans, which dropped its second straight at home and fell four games behind Memphis for the Western Conference's final playoff spot.

The Pelicans need to pile up wins in the season's final weeks to reach the playoffs. A game against a Minnesota team that came in having won twice in its past 22 games was a clear opportunity to win for the seventh time in 10 games.

Clippers 109, Thunder 94

In Oklahoma City, Kawhi Leonard scored 25 points to help Los Angeles beat the Thunder.

Montrezl Harrell and former Thunder player Paul George each added 16 points for the Clippers, who won their fifth straight. George received a warm reception from Oklahoma City's fans. The Thunder traded him last summer.

Dennis Schroder scored 24 points and former Clippers Shai Gilgeous-Alexander and Danilo Gallinari each scored 15 for the Thunder, who lost their second straight. The 15-point margin matched Oklahoma City's worst home loss of the season.

Warriors 116, Nuggets 100

In Denver, Eric Paschall scored nine of his 22 points in the fourth quarter, Andrew Wiggins turned in a double-double and Golden State rallied to stun Denver.

A 16-point underdog, the Warriors were down 77-65 with 5:08 left in the third quarter. They went on a 43-15 run to take control.

Wiggins finished with 22 points and 10 assists for the Warriors, who won for just the

second time in 11 games. Dragan Bender scored 14 on the last day of his 10-day contract.

Raptors 123, Suns 114

In Phoenix, Pascal Siakam scored 33 points, Kyle Lowry added 28 and Toronto rallied

Yelich, Brewers closing in on \$200M extension



MILWAUKEE—The Brewers aren't willing to let their biggest star leave town. The team is closing in on a massive extension with outfielder Christian Yelich. The deal could exceed \$200 million, according to Ken Rosenthal of The Athletic.

Yelich, 28, has blossomed into one of the best players in the majors since joining the Brewers in 2018. In his two seasons in Milwaukee, Yelich has hit .327/.415/.631, with 80 home runs.

The deal is expected to be announced by Friday.

While details regarding Yelich's contract aren't known yet, it's worth noting Yelich is currently under contract through the 2021 season. He also has a \$15 million club option for 2022 that the Brewers will almost certainly pick up if Yelich doesn't have a long-term contract by then. Yelich signed a seven-year, \$49.57 million extension with the Miami Marlins in 2015. The deal has been considering one of the most

team-friendly contracts in baseball, especially after the past couple years.

Yelich's new deal will keep his salary the same in 2020 and 2021, but will kick in for 2022.

If true, that would make Yelich's deal a nine-year agreement. Sherman believes Yelich will make \$215 million over the course of that deal. The deal will include a mutual option for the 2029 season. The deal will also include contract deferrals, according to Rosenthal.

For the Brewers, getting Yelich under contract doesn't impact the team's chances in 2020. But it does give both the team and its fans a star player to support for years to come. That significant in Milwaukee, which isn't typically thought of as a team that can spend a ton of money. The Brewers have shelled out money for significant talent in the past, extending Ryan Braun and signing Lorenzo Cain for \$80 million, but Yelich's rumored deal is in a completely different stratosphere.

The move will also make Yelich one of the highest paid

players in the league, a title he's most definitely earned after the past two seasons. It also lets other pitchers around the National League Central know they'll have to face Yelich for years to come—a terrifying thought.

AL East powerhouses hit by injuries

Injured New York Yankees outfielders Aaron Judge and Giancarlo Stanton are likely to miss the team's opener at Baltimore on March 26.

Judge is having more tests to determine the cause of soreness in the right pectoral area near his shoulder. Judge has not hit on the field since spring training started, and the right fielder felt discomfort Friday when he took batting practice for the second straight day in an indoor cage.

"He feels it more now in the pec," general manager Brian Cashman said Tuesday. "It's moved down toward the pec. We're just trying to figure it out and determine what's bothering him. In the meantime, I can just tell you he is feeling better in the last 48 hours."

Stanton strained his right

calf on Feb. 26 during defensive drills. Cashman thinks Stanton will be back in April.

"For the time frame, obviously, we've got to get the healing component done for a Grade 1 strain and then rehab it," Cashman said. "With arguably, what, 3 1/2 weeks to go before opening day I think we'd rather be safe than sorry."

Meanwhile, Boston Red Sox ace Chris Sale has soreness in his throwing elbow and has undergone an MRI.

Manager Ron Roenicke said Sale felt the soreness in his elbow Monday morning, the day after his 18-pitch batting practice session. Team doctors reviewed the MRI results and sent them to Dr. James Andrews.

Sale's batting practice session Sunday was the first time he faced hitters since he gave up five runs over 6 2/3 innings in a win at Cleveland on Aug. 13. He went on the injured list with elbow inflammation, finishing 6-11 with a 4.40 ERA in 25 starts—his fewest wins and starts and highest ERA in a full season since 2012.

Woods finalist in Hall of Fame 2021 Class

NEW YORK—Tiger Woods was named one of 10 finalists for the World Golf Hall of Fame's 2021 Class in the first year he's been eligible for the honor.

Woods is joined by Johnny Farrell, Tom Weiskopf and Padraig Harrington among the men who were named finalists. Dottie Pepper, Dandra Palmer, Beverly Hanson and Susie Maxwell Berning are the four women who were nominated. Marion Hollins and former PGA Tour commissioner Tim Finchem make up the contributor category, which replaced the Lifetime Achievement category this year.

"The Nominating Committee has selected 10 finalists who represent the highest caliber of golfers and contributors," World Golf Foundation CEO Greg McLaughlin said in a statement. "The recent enhancements to the World Golf Hall of Fame Induction criteria provide a great process to ensure the most worthy of candidates are being considered. We are grateful to the Nominating Committee for their work and anticipate the Class of 2021 being one of our strongest to date."

Woods has won 82 times on the PGA Tour since he turned pro in 1996, and has won 15 major championships—most recently The Masters last April. He is currently searching for his 83rd career win, which would break a tie with Sam Snead for the most wins of all time. The 44-year-old has played three times on Tour this season, most recently finishing in 68th at The Genesis Invitational last month.



This year marks the first that the World Golf Hall of Fame lowered its eligibility requirements from 50 to 45 years old or three years since retirement. The finalists were selected by a "nominating committee" made up of 26 people, including six current Hall of Fame members. A 20-person "selection committee" will make the final decision in a vote, which is expected to

take place next week.

McIlroy grouped with Rose, Molinari

Meanwhile, another star-studded field has gathered in Orlando this week for the Arnold Palmer Invitational, including a notable European trio that will feature the world No. 1. Here's a look at

some of the marquee, early-round groupings this week at Bay Hill, where Rory McIlroy will tee off alongside a pair of former Ryder Cup teammates.

This grouping features each of the last two tournament champions at Bay Hill, as McIlroy took the title in 2018 while Molinari rallied to win last year with a

final-round 64. Only one of them comes in with any momentum, as Molinari's search for form continues while McIlroy has finished fifth in each of his last two starts. Rounding out the trio is Rose, who has finished third or better three times here since 2011.

Adam Scott got back into the winner's circle last month at Riviera, and now he returns to a course where he notably let

AP
Tiger Woods hits out of a greenside bunker on the 17th hole during the final round of the Genesis Invitational golf tournament at Riviera Country Club, Sunday, Feb. 16, 2020, in the Pacific Palisades area of Los Angeles.

a seven-shot lead slip away six years ago. Jason Day won this event in 2016 but withdrew last year because of a back injury, while Brooks Koepka was a late addition to the field after missing the cut at the Honda Classic and now hopes to bounce back on a course where he has missed the cut in each of his last two appearances.

Sungjae Im will tee off for the first time as a PGA Tour winner, getting right back to work after his breakthrough victory at PGA National. Marc Leishman won this event in 2017 and is already a winner this year thanks to a clutch final round at Torrey Pines, while Rickie Fowler will be sporting tributes to The King all week with his equipment and apparel and hopes to match it with his game, having finished third here back in 2013 behind Woods.

Patrick Reed and DeChambeau meet again, two weeks removed from their clash in Mexico City when Reed erased a late deficit to claim another WGC title. Both had strong showings here two years ago, with Bryson DeChambeau finishing second and Reed T-7. Rounding out the all-American trio will be Phil Mickelson, a winner here in 1997 who missed the cut here last year in his first Bay Hill appearance since 2013.

TOKYO (AP)—Japan's Olympic minister said Tuesday the contract to hold the Tokyo Games only specifies the event has to be held during 2020.

Seiko Hashimoto's response to a question in the upper house of parliament implies the Olympics could be held later in the year and would not have to start on July 24 as planned. The Paralympics open on Aug. 25.

The Tokyo Olympics are being threatened by a fast-spreading virus that has been blamed for 12 deaths in Japan and has shut down most schools, sports competitions and Olympic-related events in the country. The virus that started in China has been detected in at least 70 countries, with more than 90,000 cases and 3,100 deaths reported.

"The IOC has the right to cancel the games only if they are not held during 2020," Hashimoto told parliament. "This can be interpreted to mean the games can be post-

Japan Olympic Minister: Games could be held any time in 2020

poned as long as they are held during the calendar year."

However, the suggestion of a possible change of plan was quickly batted back at a meeting of the International Olympic Committee's executive board in Switzerland.

"We are going to have the games on the 24th of July," IOC spokesman Mark Adams said at a briefing.

IOC President Thomas Bach and Tokyo organizers have repeatedly said they expect the Olympics to open on schedule. Others have suggested the spreading virus could force cancellation, postponement or moving events to other cities.

The IOC issued a statement earlier Tuesday expressing "full commitment to the success of the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020, taking place from July 24 to Aug. 9, 2020."

Bach then made the unusual move of stepping out from the

first day of a two-day meeting at IOC headquarters in Lausanne to make a statement.

"I would like to encourage all the athletes to continue their preparation for the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 with great confidence and with full steam," he said.

Bach also praised a panel created last month that brings together the WHO, public authorities in Japan, and Olympic officials in Tokyo and Lausanne.

In an interview last week with only Japanese media, Bach had declined to "fuel the flames of speculation" about reports of cancellation or postponement.

Hashimoto was asked if she believed the Olympics should be held even if the coronavirus outbreak is worse than it is now.

"We are making the utmost effort so that we don't have to

face that situation," she said.

Any decision to move the games back would impact international broadcasters, who would have sway over any changes.

The International Olympic Committee gets 73% of its \$5.7 billion income in a four-year Olympic cycle from selling broadcast rights. About half of that TV income is from American network NBC.

NBC parent company Comcast said that because of insurance and the way contracts are written, NBC won't suffer losses if the Olympics are canceled. But Comcast CEO Brian Roberts said the company would miss out on ad-driven profits, which was \$250 million for the 2016 Rio Olympics. He did not address the possibility of postponement of the games during his remarks at an investment conference Tuesday.



Pacifica Insurance offers \$5K prize at NMC golf tourney



In its ongoing efforts to further higher education in the Marianas, Pacifica Insurance is offering a \$5,000 hole-in-one prize for the 16th Annual Northern Marianas College Foundation Open Golf Tournament scheduled for March 21.

The first lucky golfer who makes a hole-in-one at the LaoLao Bay Golf and Resort's hole No. 4 on the east course will win the prize.

"NMC plays a vital role in the lives of our people and their education," said Pacifica Insurance president Shirley Sablan. "They need our support now more than ever before to recover and rebuild in order to keep essential programs running, classrooms functional and facilities advanced. Golf for a cause or donate."

Proceeds from this year's tournament will go to helping NMC with its recovery efforts from Super Typhoon Yutu, which destroyed most of NMC's campus in 2018.

"Pacifica Insurance's contribution and steadfast support



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Pacifica Insurance is offering a \$5,000 hole-in-one prize at the 16th NMC Foundation Golf Tournament set for March 21 at the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort. In the photo are Pacifica Insurance employees with Pacifica Insurance president Shirley Sablan, center right, NMC staff and students, and NMC interim president Frankie Eliptico, center left.

throughout the years reflect the company's commitment to providing educational opportunities for CNMI students," said NMC interim president Frankie Eliptico.

The 16th Annual Northern Marianas College Foundation Open Golf Tournament will have a showtime at 6am and shotgun start at 7am. The tournament will follow a medal

play format.

First place winners in the men's Championship, A, B, C, Senior, and Ladies Flights will each receive \$500, while \$300 and \$200 will go to the

second and third place finishers, respectively. Hole-in-one prizes also include a 2020 Kia Soul from Joeten Motors and a \$5,000 hole-in-one prize from McDonald's. The tournament will also feature many other items such as raffle prizes like smartphones, hotel stays,

meals, and much more.

Registration and payment can be made at Laolao Bay Golf & Resort or the NMC Cashier's Office. For sponsorship opportunities or registration information, visit marianas.edu or call 237-6833. (NMC)

MJD

From Page 24

period with Douglas Schmidt and Preston Basa teaming up in the breakaway. Schmidt scored 9 points in the third canto, turning a 39-33 halftime lead to a 66-44 advantage going into the final frame. Basa also delivered 9 points and all were made from the 3-point area.

Despite the big lead, MJD still went for Schmidt at the start of the fourth period and the former CNMI National Team player added 6 more points before he was recalled to the bench.

Then with the win already secured, as MJD was way head,

76-49, coach Marvin Deocares took out his starters in favor of the team's second and third stringers. The relievers finished the job en route to MJD's 29-point winning margin.

Schmidt top-scored for MJD with his 35 points, while Basa and Errol Peredo registered twin digits, too, making 12 and 11, respectively.

Alex Escano paced JNL with his 19 points.

Meanwhile, Lakay stole victory from Saipan Warriors in the fourth quarter.

The final canto started with Lakay facing a 4-point deficit, 37-41, but the team went on to complete a comeback with Chris Lilles and Richard Mc-

Williams joining forces in the payoff period. The two combined for 16 points, while four of their teammates contributed at least one basket apiece to hand Lakay the come-from-behind win.

McWilliams had a game-high 28 points, while Lilles tallied 12.

The Saipan Warriors folded up in the fourth quarter, as only three players hit the board for the losing squad. Jemar Wijangco registered 3 points, while Jeff Cabildo and J.R. Galang added 2 apiece.

Monday's Game

Lakay 61—McWilliams 28, Lilles 12, Cabrera 8, Ca-

palad 4, Solis 3, Moises 2, Toribio 2, Macaranas 1.

Saipan Warriors 48—Galang 10, Agosto 8, Wijangco 5, Cabildo 4, Lumen 4, Ayeras 4, Romo 3, Baron 3.

Scoring by quarters: 17-13, 25-30, 37-41, 61-48.

Tuesday's Game

MJD 85—Schmidt 35, Basa 12, Peredo 11, Guiab 6, Danipog 4, Bisana 4, Cortez 4, Deocares 3, Quintip 2, Clave-ria 2.

JNL 56—Escano 19, Alvis 8, Agustin 7, Austria 6, Padolina 4, Cellona 3, Jarap 3, Caraig 2, Taraya 2.

Scoring by quarters: 21-23, 39-33, 66-44, 85-56.

KHS

From Page 24

preliminary race with a time of 7:47.28, while MHS came in second (7:52.66), and KHS was disqualified.

In the boys 500m event, Kagman excelled both in the preliminary (2:59.12) and final races (2:56.57), while MHS (3:06.93/3:11.54) and SSHS (3:03.41/3:30.32) switched places.

In the 1,000m race, the Ayuyus logged 6:31.92 in the finals and 6:11.91 in the prelims. The Rays were ranked second in both the preliminary event (6:13.01) and finale (6:49.22), leaving MHS (7:10:44/7:01.37) at third place.

For the 500m mixed relay, Kagman posted 3:09.70 in the finale, while MHS and Saipan Southern recorded 3:10.87 and 3:27.94, respectively.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Kagman High School paddlers and coaches pose for a group photo after competing in the 2019-2020 Public School System Interscholastic High School Canoe Race Series last month at Kilili Beach.

The same rankings took place in the preliminaries with the Ayuyus registering 3:05:14 against the 3:14 10 of the Dolphins and 3:22.04 of the Rays.

In the 1,000m mixed relay, Kagman logged 6:54.87 in the prelims and 7:13.10 in the finals. MHS was second in the

preliminary race (7:17.49), but dropped to third in the finals (7:22.46). Saipan Southern posted 7:34.38 for second place in the finals and more than three seconds faster than its prelim time (7:37.40).

In last Saturday's long course from Kilili Beach to the

13 Fishermen, KHS' boys crew completed the 4.5-mile race in 47:32 to prevail over SSHS (51:39) and MHS (59:52). In the girls division, Kagman submitted 54:22 to down MHS (55:11) and SSHS (55:39).

Meanwhile, races will resume this Saturday.

EASY

From Page 24

In the second game last Sunday, Paire eased past the debuting Victory FC, 6-2.

Joe Miller made a hat trick for Paire, giving Victory FC a rude welcome in the league. Alan Guidino added a pair of goals and Robbie Greene chipped in one for Paire's strong start.

Victory drew its goals from Scott Kim and David Mafnas.

In the third game in Division A, All Blue dominated Old B Bank last Monday, 5-1.

Kohtaro Goto towed All Blue to victory after making two goals.

DIVISION B Shirley's 4, Matansa 1

Division B opening matches were also played last Sunday with Shirley's downing Matansa in the first tiff.

Lalaine Pagarao powered Shirley's to its season opening victory after delivering twin goals, which happened to be the team's last two, as

she scored in the 78th and 80th minute.

Mingguang Au put Shirley's on the board in the 27th minute and tied the game. Wilbert Capayas, earlier in the 14th minute, gave Matansa its first and only taste of the lead. Shirley's then grabbed the upper hand in the 33rd minute off Wesley Bogdan's goal.

Island Star 4, NMI WNT 2

In the other match in the division, Island Star outclassed the NMI Women's National Team.

Four different players scored for Island Star with Feng Yu finding the back of the net in the 14th minute. The rest of Island Star's goals were made in the second half with Kai-Jiun Ma, Han Wu, and Guang Zhi Jin lighting up the board in the 49th, 67th, and 79th minute, respectively.

The NMI WNT also had one goal in the first half—courtesy of Kaithlyn Chavez's shot in the 34th minute—while the second was from Jannah Casarino in the 58th minute.

TEAM STANDINGS

DIVISION A							
CLUBS	W	D	L	PTS	GF	GA	GD
All Blue	1	0	0	3	5	1	4
Paire	1	0	0	3	6	2	4
TanHoldings	1	0	0	3	7	4	3
Kanoa	0	0	1	0	4	7	-3
Victory	0	0	1	0	2	6	-4
Old B Bank	0	0	1	0	1	5	-4
DIVISION B							
Shirley's	1	0	0	3	4	1	3
Island Star	1	0	0	3	4	2	2
Matansa	0	0	1	0	1	4	-3
WNT	0	0	1	0	2	4	-2



Nets rally
to stun
Celtics in OT

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Saipan Tribune Sports

Woods finalist
in Hall of
Fame 2021
Class

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

KHS paddlers show way



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Two teams cross paths along the long distance course last Saturday during the second leg of the 2019-2020 Public School System Interscholastic High School Canoe Race Series.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Kagman High School ruled the first two legs of the 2019-2020 Public School System Interscholastic High School Canoe Race Series.

After eight events, Kagman collected 53 points to place ahead of Marianas High School (27) and Saipan South-

ern High School (26).

Kagman prevailed in the girls 500m event and swept the boys and mixed 500m

and 1,000m races held in the waters off Kilili Beach last Feb. 22 and then picked up where it left off after topping the long distance course last Saturday.

The Lady Ayuyus finished the 500m finals in 3:34:61 to beat Saipan Southern High School (3:52.89) and Marianas High School (disqualified). Kagman also led the preliminaries with a time of 3:18.75 against the 3:22.32 and 3:36.56



of SSHS and MHS, respectively. The Lady Ayuyus got 10 points in the two races, while the Lady Rays earned 6 and the Lady Dolphins received one.

In the 1,000m finale, MHS was the first finisher at 7:34.76 to get 8 points, followed by KHS (8:06.35) and Saipan Southern (9:38.98). The Lady Rays earlier ruled the 1,000m

See KHS on Page 23

MJD routs foe; Lakay rallies to win

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Lakay and MJD made the grade in their opening games in the One Pacific Promotional Basketball League 2020 at the Civic Center Court.



MJD hammered JNL, 85-56, last Tuesday night, while Lakay topped Saipan Warriors last Monday, 61-48, for a good start in the 16-team league.

MJD set up the lopsided win in the third

See MJD on Page 23

Easy wins in M-League opening week

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER



Three teams won convincingly in the opening Division A matches in the 2020 Spring Men's M-League at the NMI Soccer Training Center.

In the curtain-raiser, TanHoldings Football Club topped Kanoa Football Club last Sunday, 7-4.

TanHoldings was on target right at the first half to set up the easy win. John Michael Rojas scored three goals, making them in succession, as his first came in the 25th and the last two in a span of four minutes (32nd and 36th) to lead TanHoldings's season debut victory.

TanHoldings' four other goals were also delivered in the first half with Ronnel Oca-



nada drawing first blood in the 14th minute and Martin Jambor, Joshua De Leon, and Eunsyu Hahn lighting up the board in the 16th, 38th, and 45th, respectively.

Kanoa was shutdown in the entire opening 45 minutes of play before getting into its rhythm, but failing to overhaul the deficit. Jhoey Noble broke the spell for Kanoa in the 52nd minute, while Andruw Omelau closed out for the team in the 83rd for his second goal (first one was in the 60th). Sebastien Manabat was the other scorer for Kanoa.

See EASY on Page 23

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Taka Borja plays for All Blue, which won its opening game in Division A of the 2020 Spring Men's M-League after downing Old B Bank, 5-1, last Monday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

MJD's Cecilio Bisana, center, drives against two JNL defenders during the fourth quarter of their game in the One Pacific Promotional Basketball League 2020 last Tuesday at the Civic Center Court.